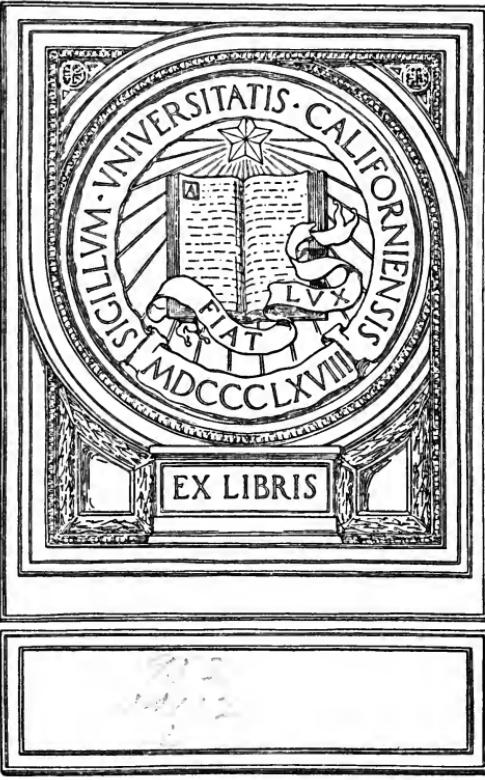


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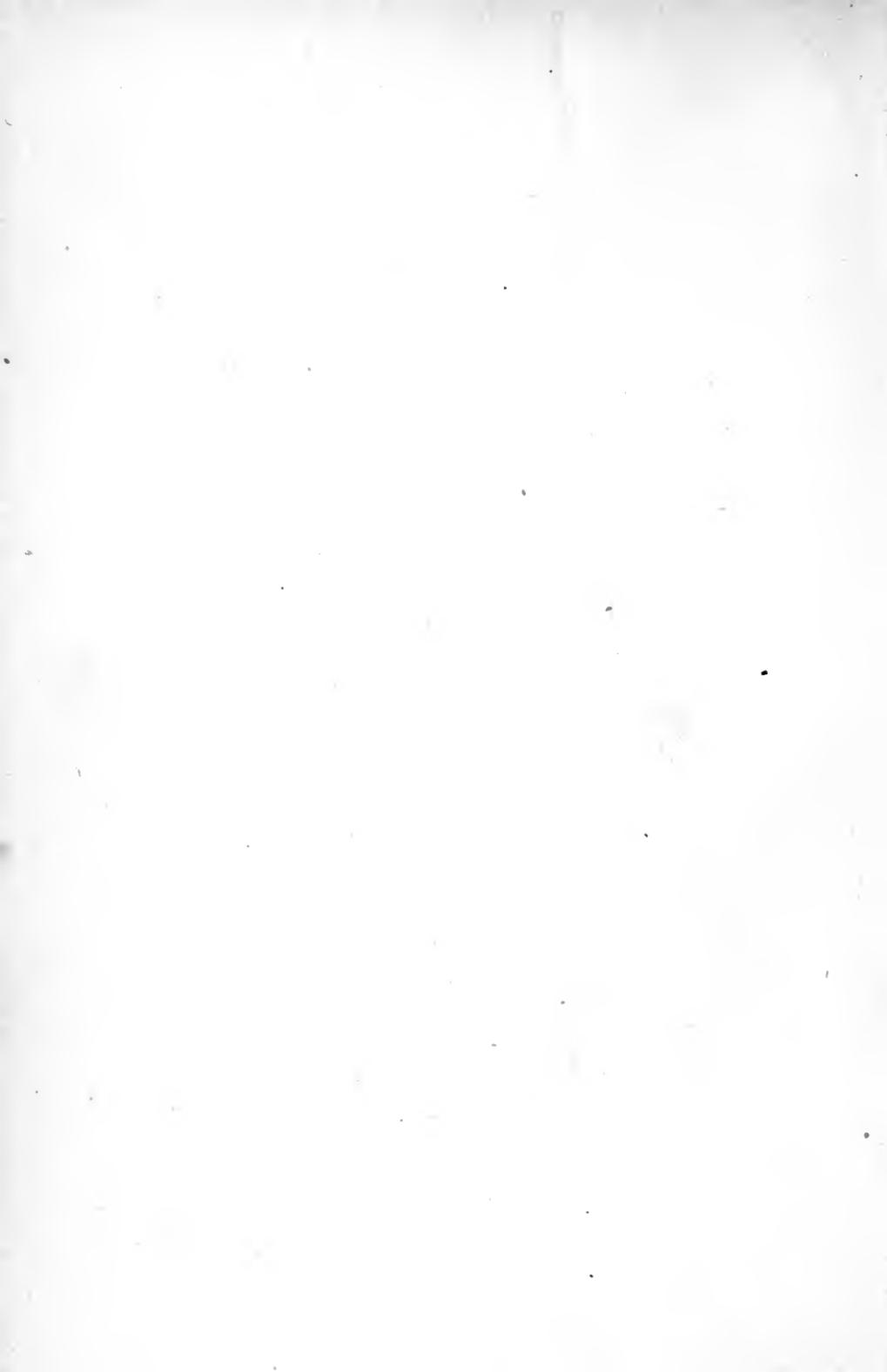
BY

HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE

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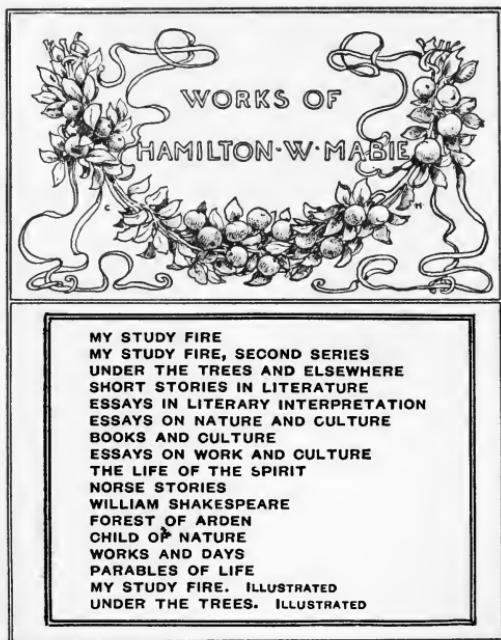


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“The Goddess moving across the fields”



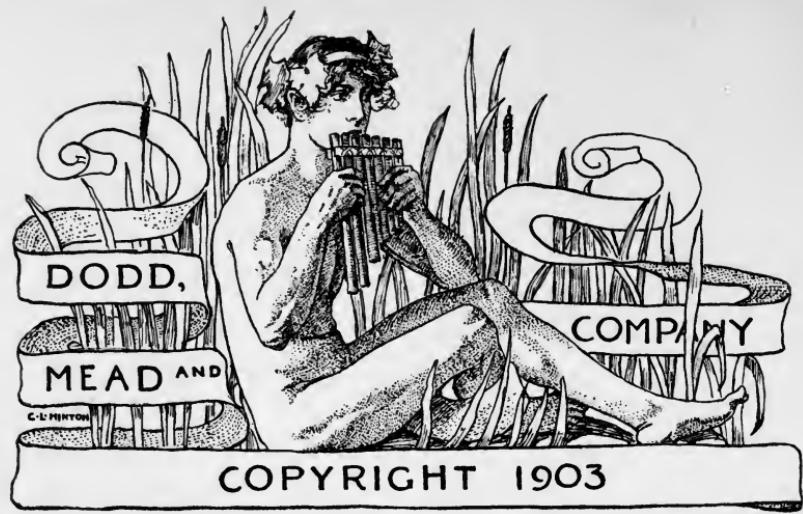
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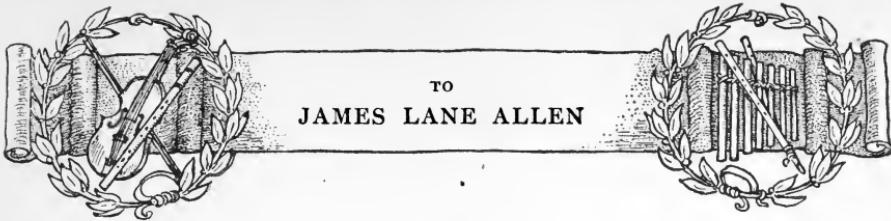


HAMILTON · WRIGHT · MABIE

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WITH DECORATIONS BY CHARLES L HINTON

PUBLISHERS - DODD MEAD AND CO
NEW YORK





TO
JAMES LANE ALLEN

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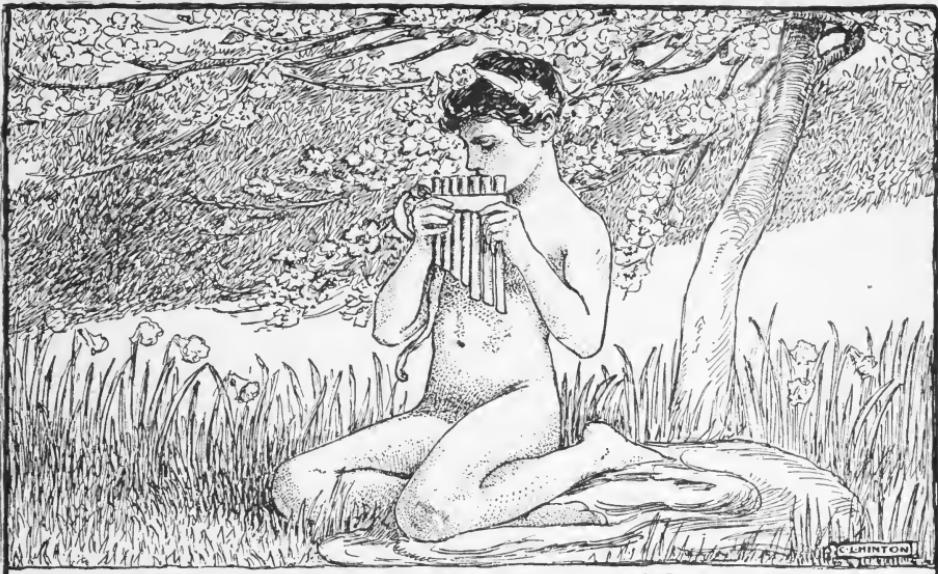
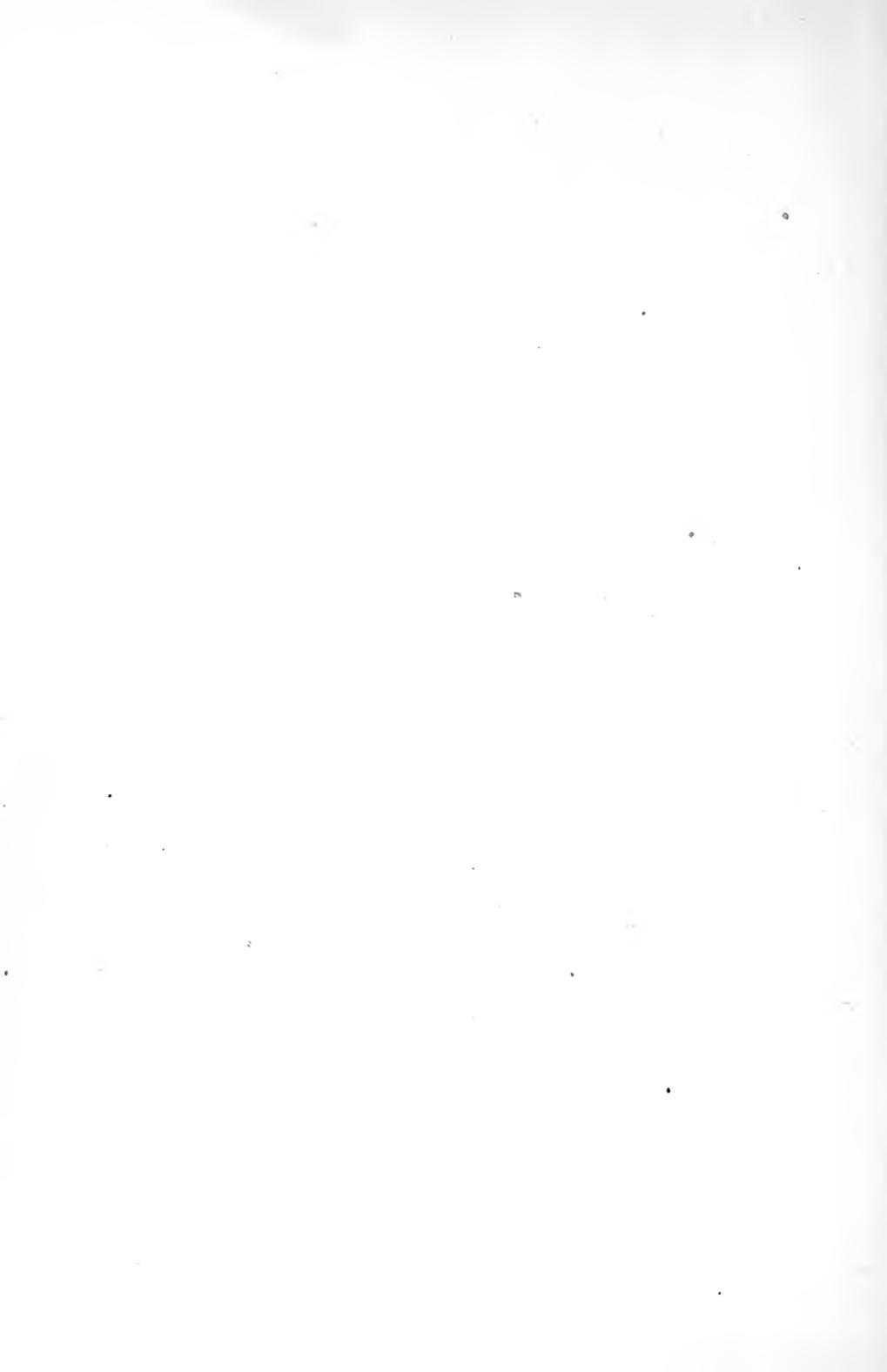
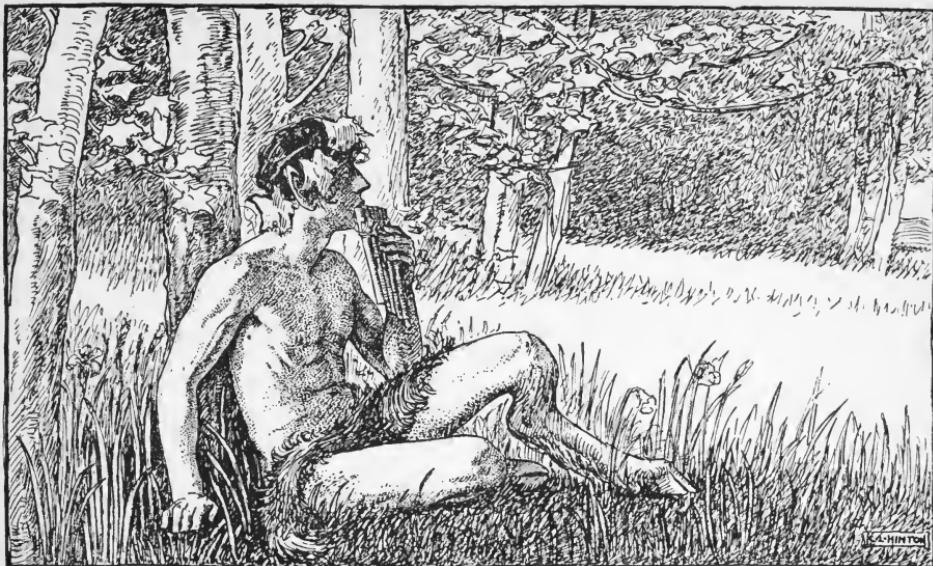


TABLE OF CONTENTS

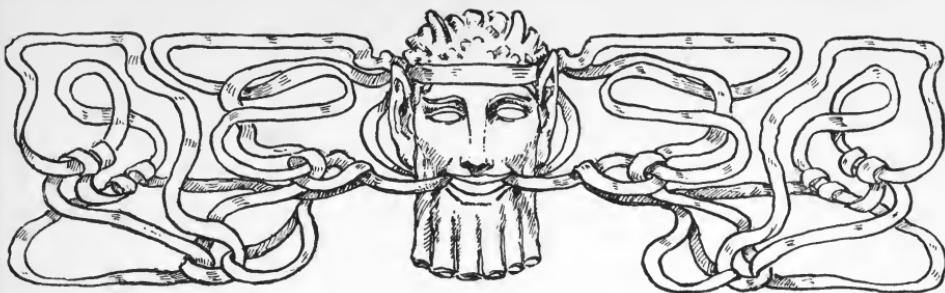
	PAGE
THE PIPES OF THE FAUN	13
THE LYRE OF APOLLO	51
THE SICKLE OF DEMETER	85
POSTLUDE	115





LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS
BY
WILL·H·LOW





THE PIPES OF THE FAUN

I

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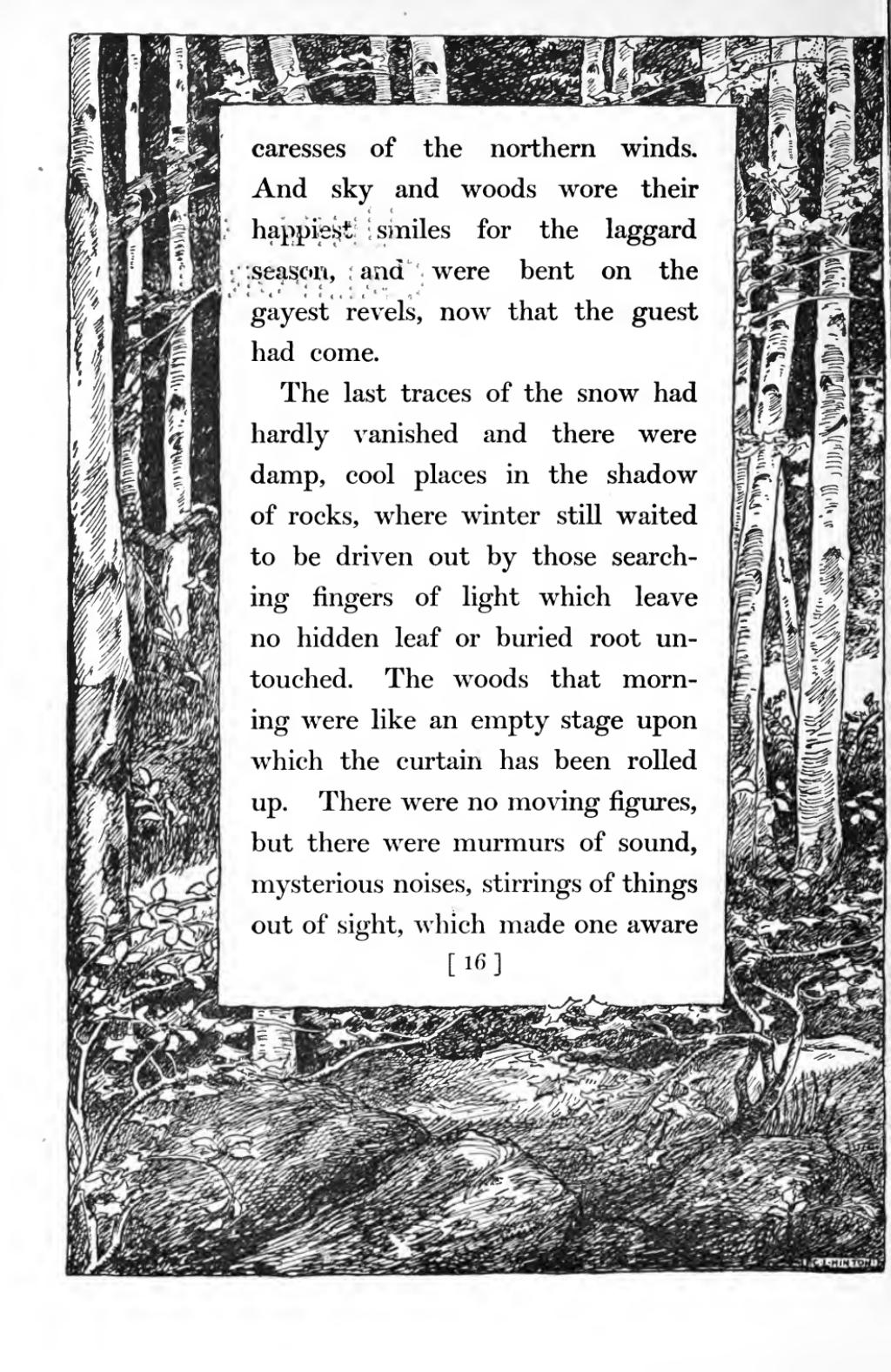


IN ARCADY

I

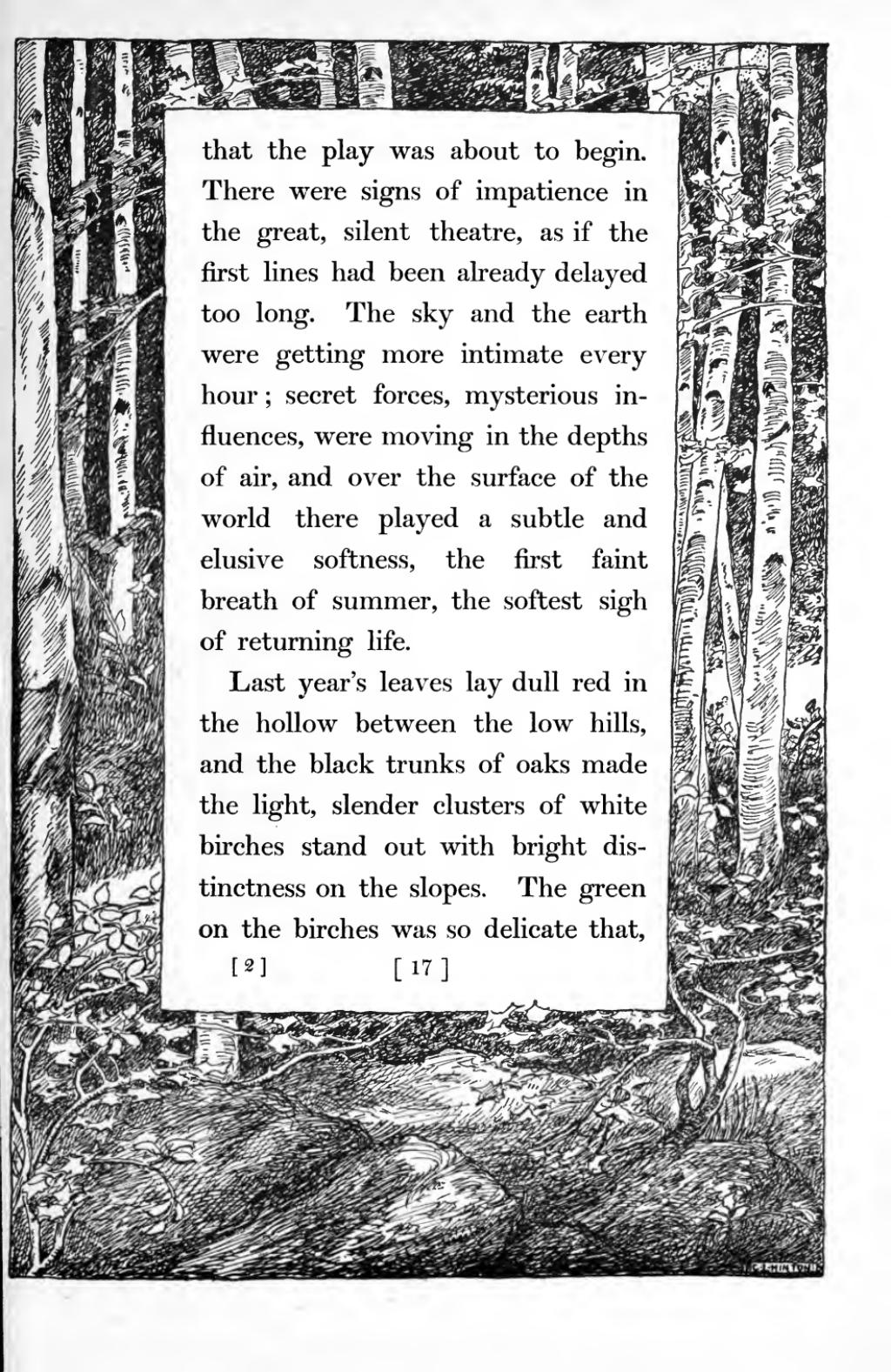
THE tenderest green was on the foliage, the whitest clouds were in the sky, and the showers were so sudden that the birds were hardly dry of one wetting before there came another. These swift dashes of rain seemed to fall out of the clear blue, so mysteriously did the light clouds dissolve into the depths of heaven after every rush of pattering drops in the woods. It was the first spring day. The season had come shyly up from the south, as if half afraid to trust its sensitive growths to the harsh airs and rough

[15]



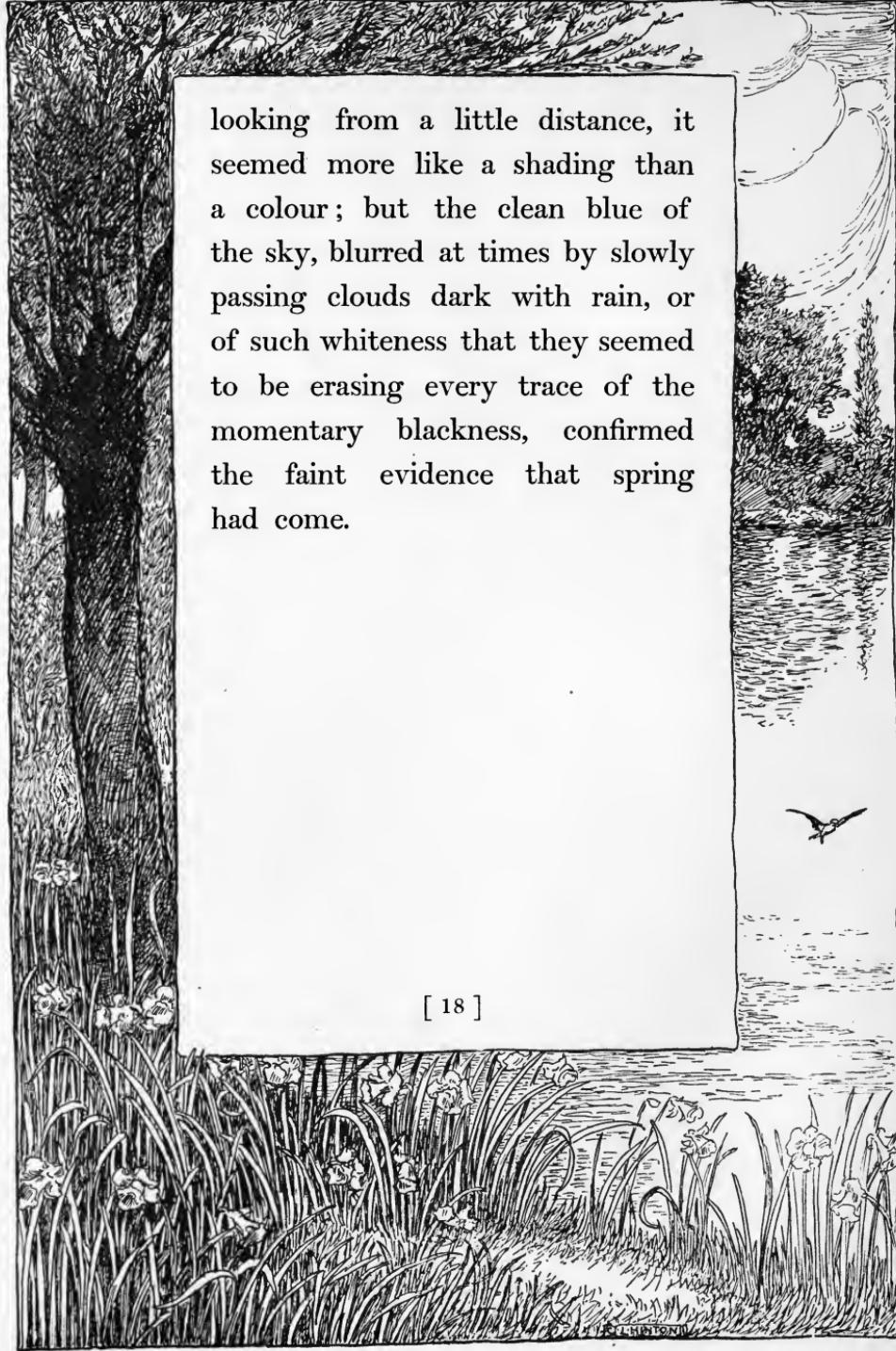
caresses of the northern winds.
And sky and woods wore their
happiest smiles for the laggard
season, and were bent on the
gayest revels, now that the guest
had come.

The last traces of the snow had hardly vanished and there were damp, cool places in the shadow of rocks, where winter still waited to be driven out by those searching fingers of light which leave no hidden leaf or buried root untouched. The woods that morning were like an empty stage upon which the curtain has been rolled up. There were no moving figures, but there were murmurs of sound, mysterious noises, stirrings of things out of sight, which made one aware



that the play was about to begin. There were signs of impatience in the great, silent theatre, as if the first lines had been already delayed too long. The sky and the earth were getting more intimate every hour; secret forces, mysterious influences, were moving in the depths of air, and over the surface of the world there played a subtle and elusive softness, the first faint breath of summer, the softest sigh of returning life.

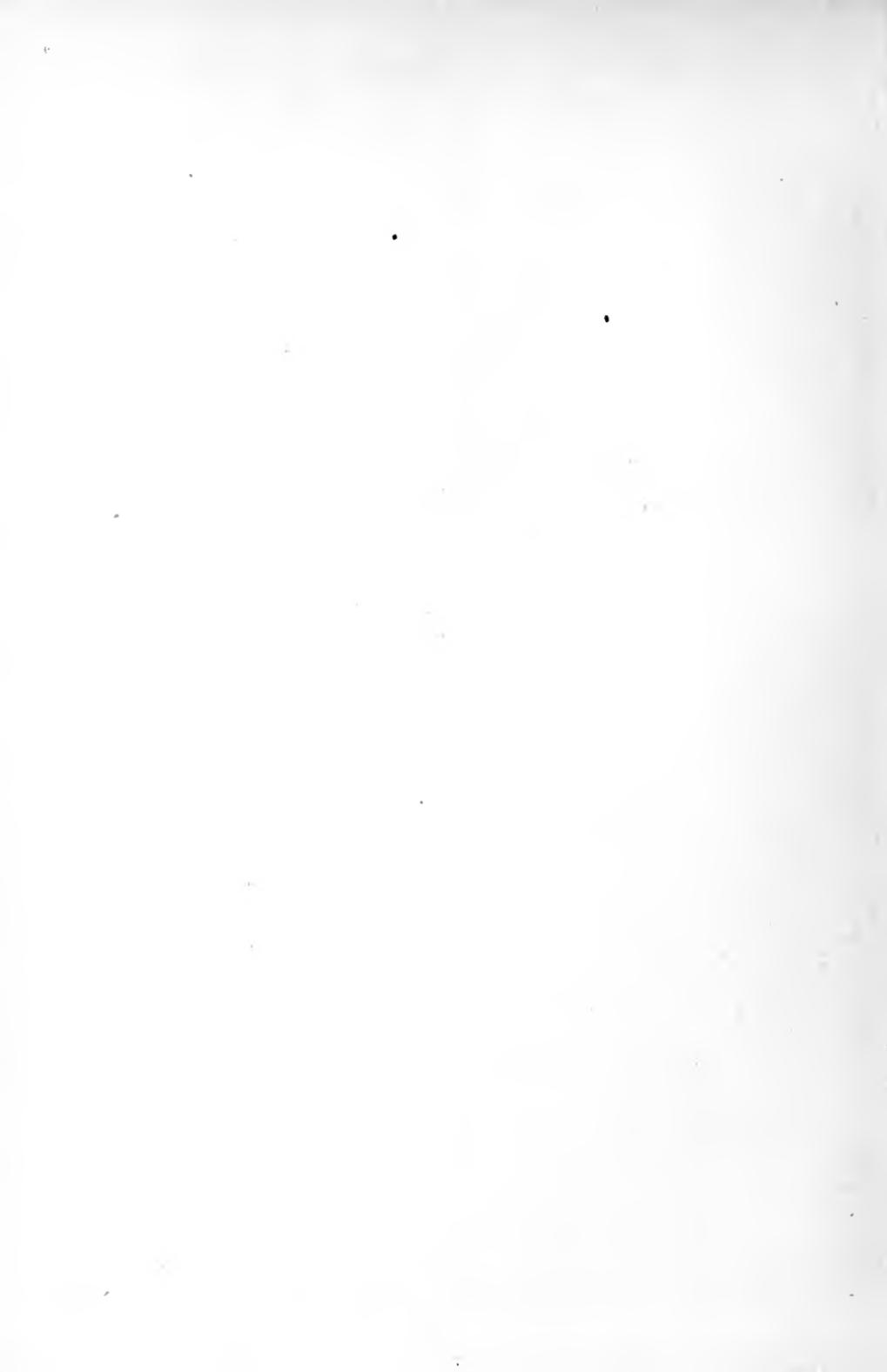
Last year's leaves lay dull red in the hollow between the low hills, and the black trunks of oaks made the light, slender clusters of white birches stand out with bright distinctness on the slopes. The green on the birches was so delicate that,



looking from a little distance, it seemed more like a shading than a colour; but the clean blue of the sky, blurred at times by slowly passing clouds dark with rain, or of such whiteness that they seemed to be erasing every trace of the momentary blackness, confirmed the faint evidence that spring had come.

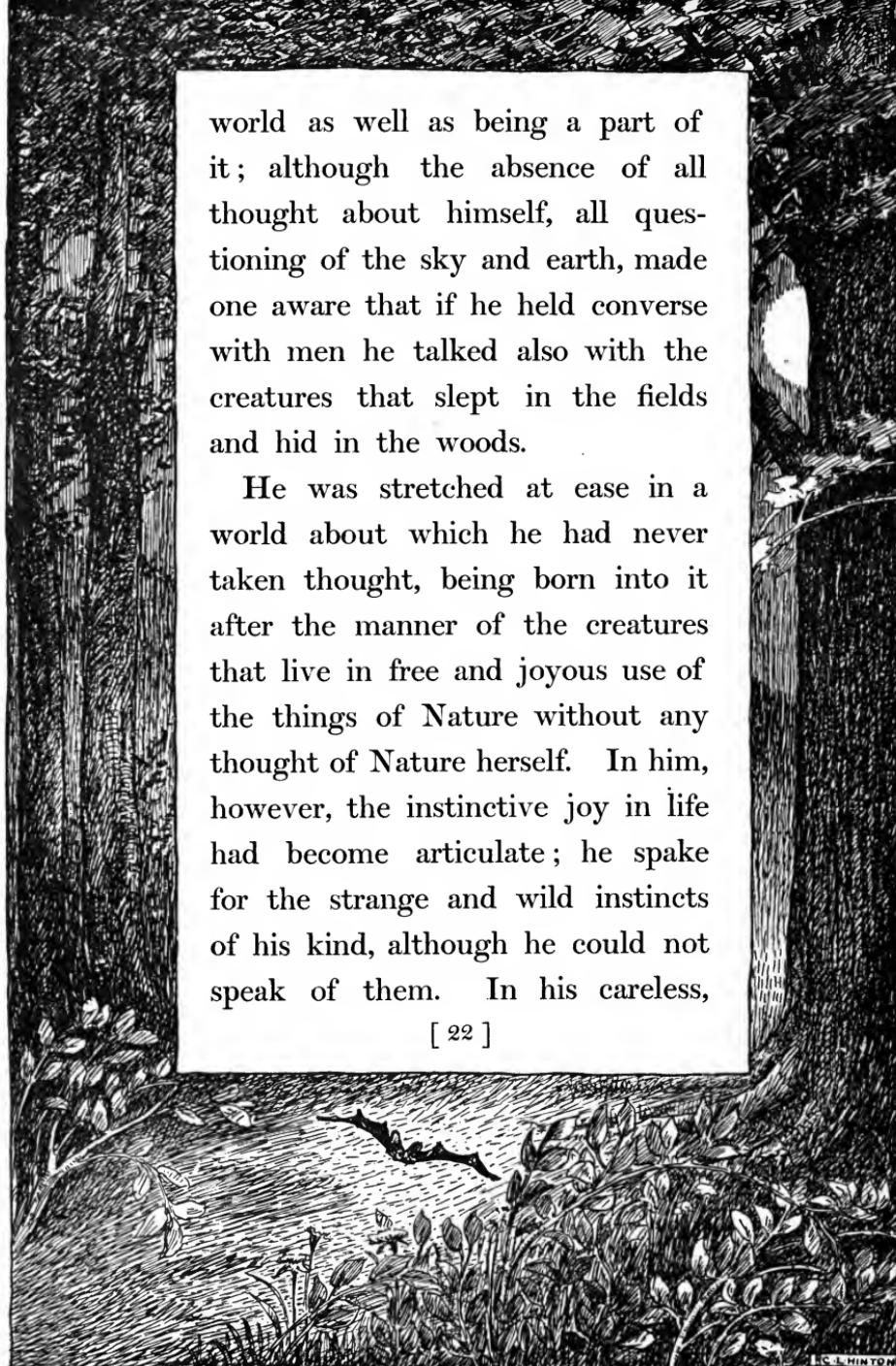


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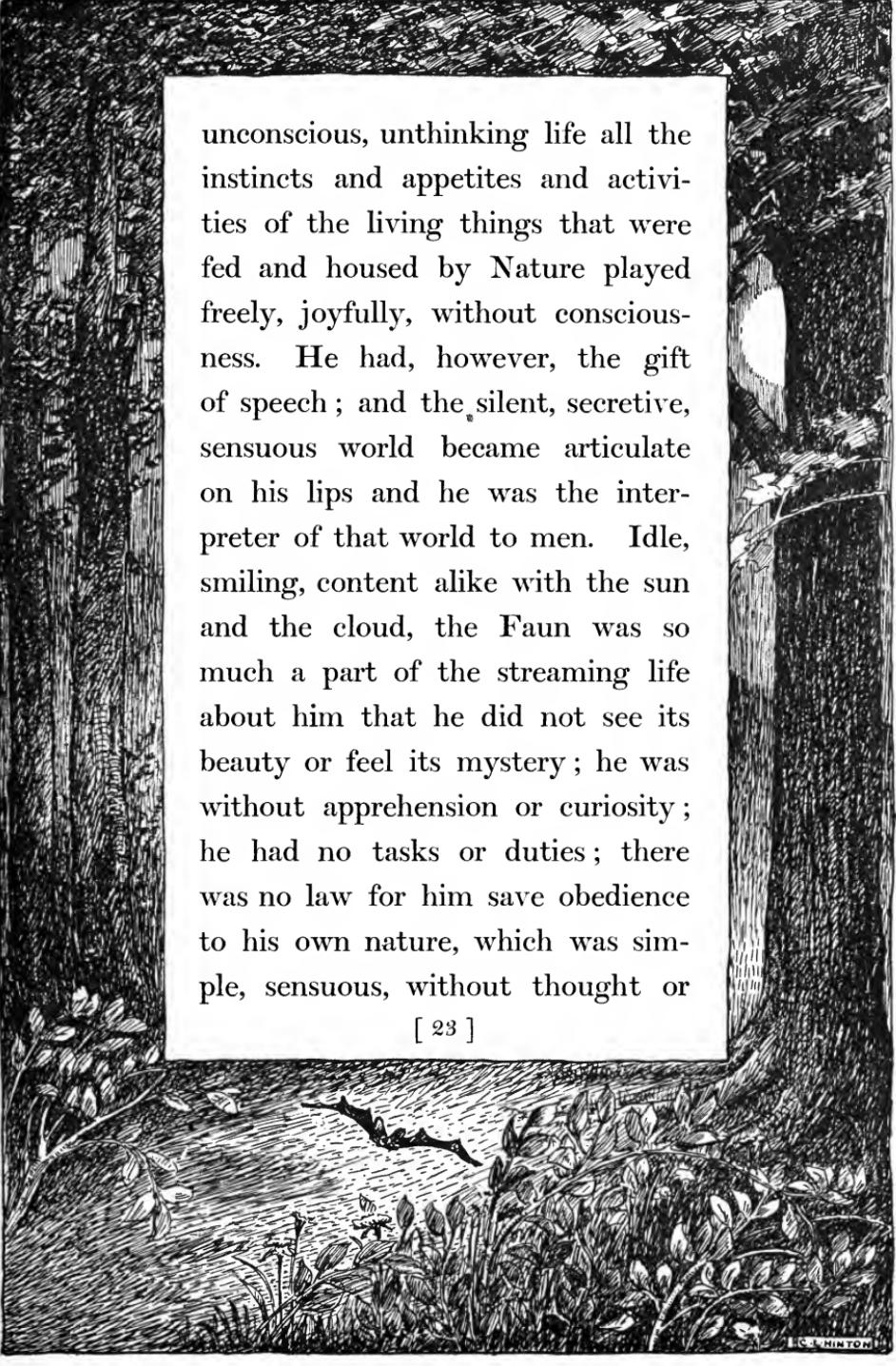
II

SO, at least, thought the Faun, sitting at ease with his back against an oak, his pipe in his hand and his eye wandering curiously through the open spaces of the wood. So entirely at home was he that solitude or society was alike to him, and the speech of men or of animals equally plain. There were hints of wildness about him ; for he was brother to the folk in fur and feather that lived in the wood, although the light in his eye and the pipe in his hand showed that he had travelled far from the old instincts without having lost them. There were hints of human fellowship in his air of seeing the

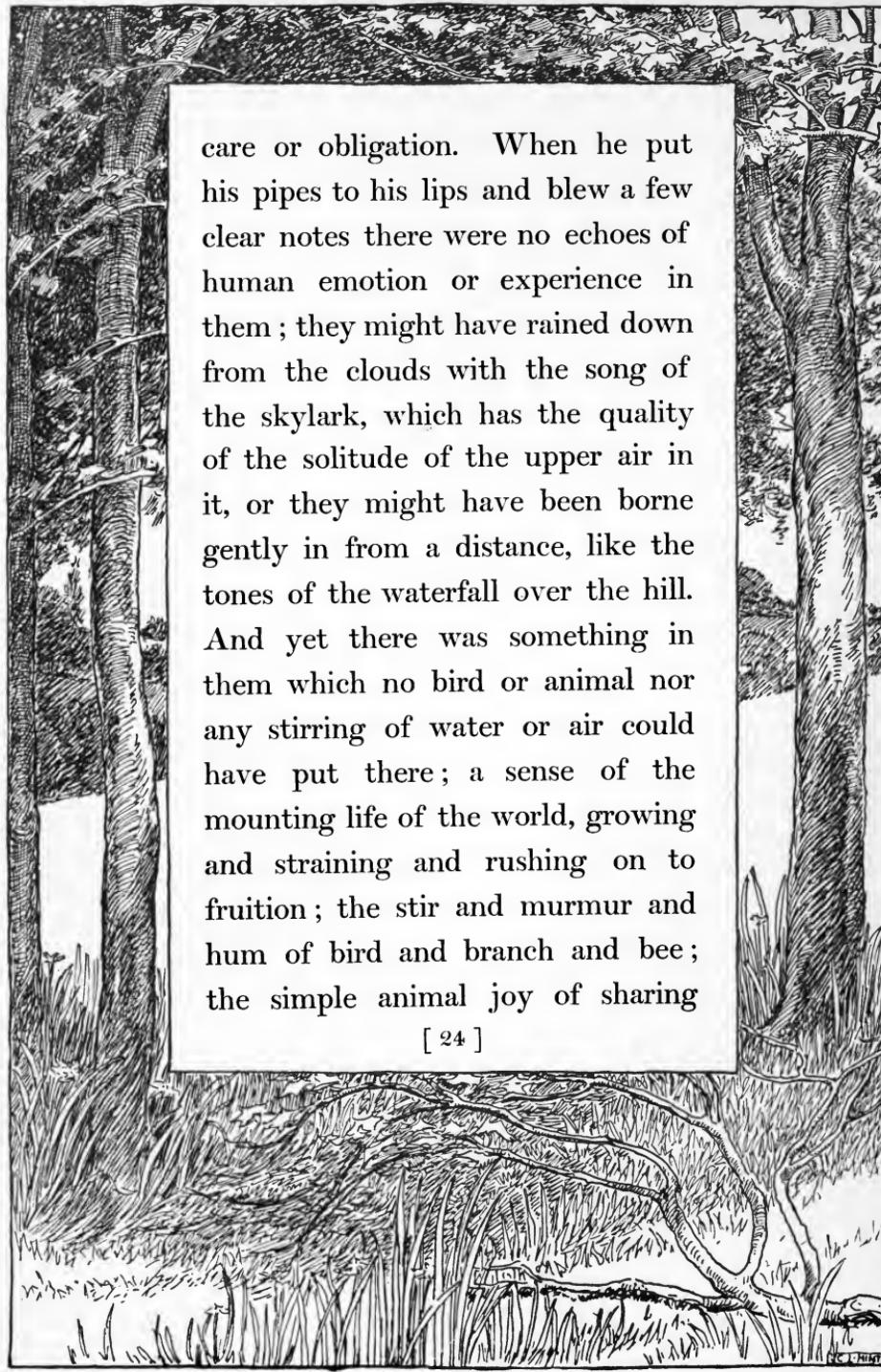


world as well as being a part of it; although the absence of all thought about himself, all questioning of the sky and earth, made one aware that if he held converse with men he talked also with the creatures that slept in the fields and hid in the woods.

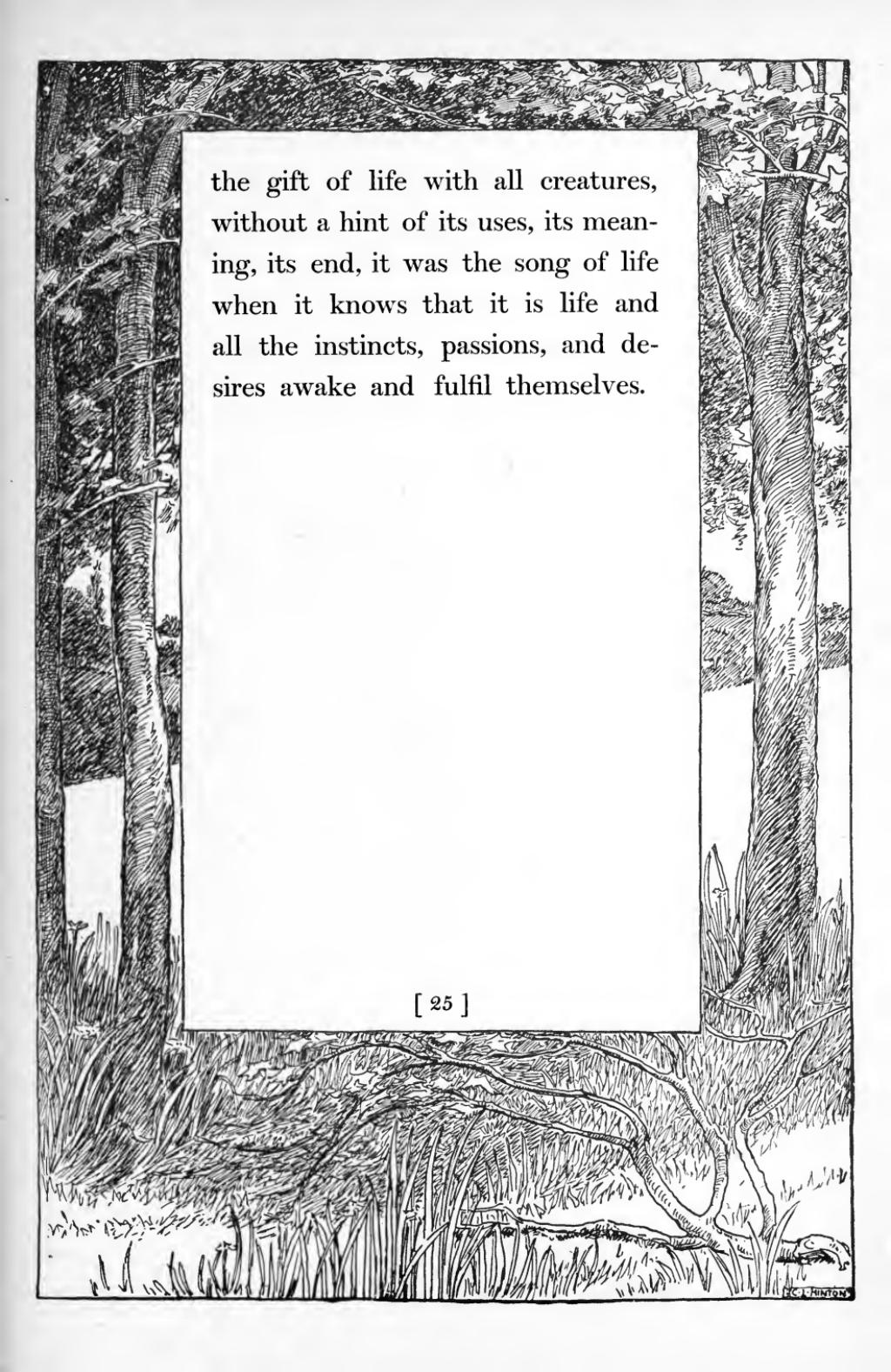
He was stretched at ease in a world about which he had never taken thought, being born into it after the manner of the creatures that live in free and joyous use of the things of Nature without any thought of Nature herself. In him, however, the instinctive joy in life had become articulate; he spake for the strange and wild instincts of his kind, although he could not speak of them. In his careless,



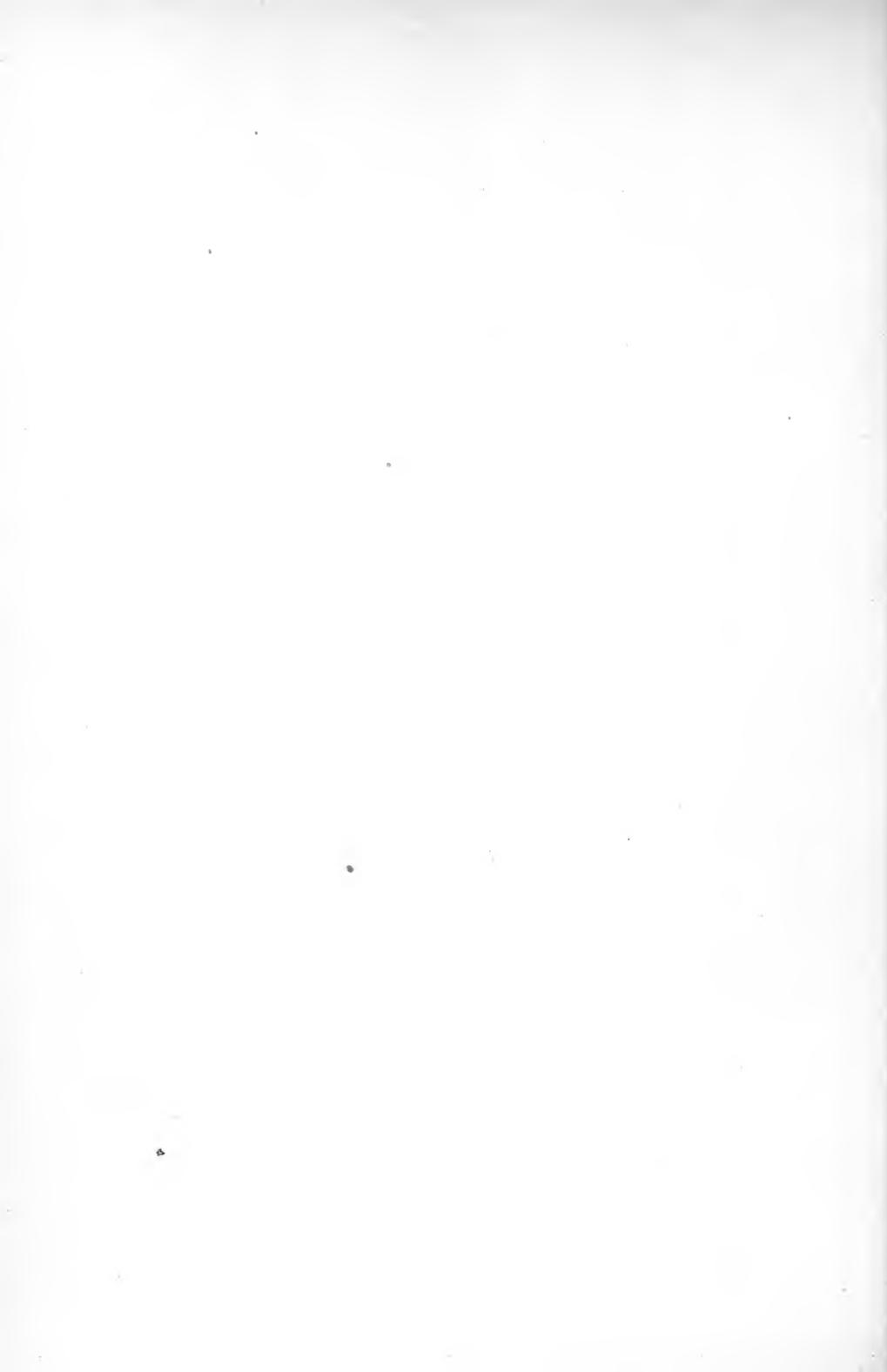
unconscious, unthinking life all the instincts and appetites and activities of the living things that were fed and housed by Nature played freely, joyfully, without consciousness. He had, however, the gift of speech ; and the silent, secretive, sensuous world became articulate on his lips and he was the interpreter of that world to men. Idle, smiling, content alike with the sun and the cloud, the Faun was so much a part of the streaming life about him that he did not see its beauty or feel its mystery ; he was without apprehension or curiosity ; he had no tasks or duties ; there was no law for him save obedience to his own nature, which was simple, sensuous, without thought or



care or obligation. When he put his pipes to his lips and blew a few clear notes there were no echoes of human emotion or experience in them ; they might have rained down from the clouds with the song of the skylark, which has the quality of the solitude of the upper air in it, or they might have been borne gently in from a distance, like the tones of the waterfall over the hill. And yet there was something in them which no bird or animal nor any stirring of water or air could have put there ; a sense of the mounting life of the world, growing and straining and rushing on to fruition ; the stir and murmur and hum of bird and branch and bee ; the simple animal joy of sharing

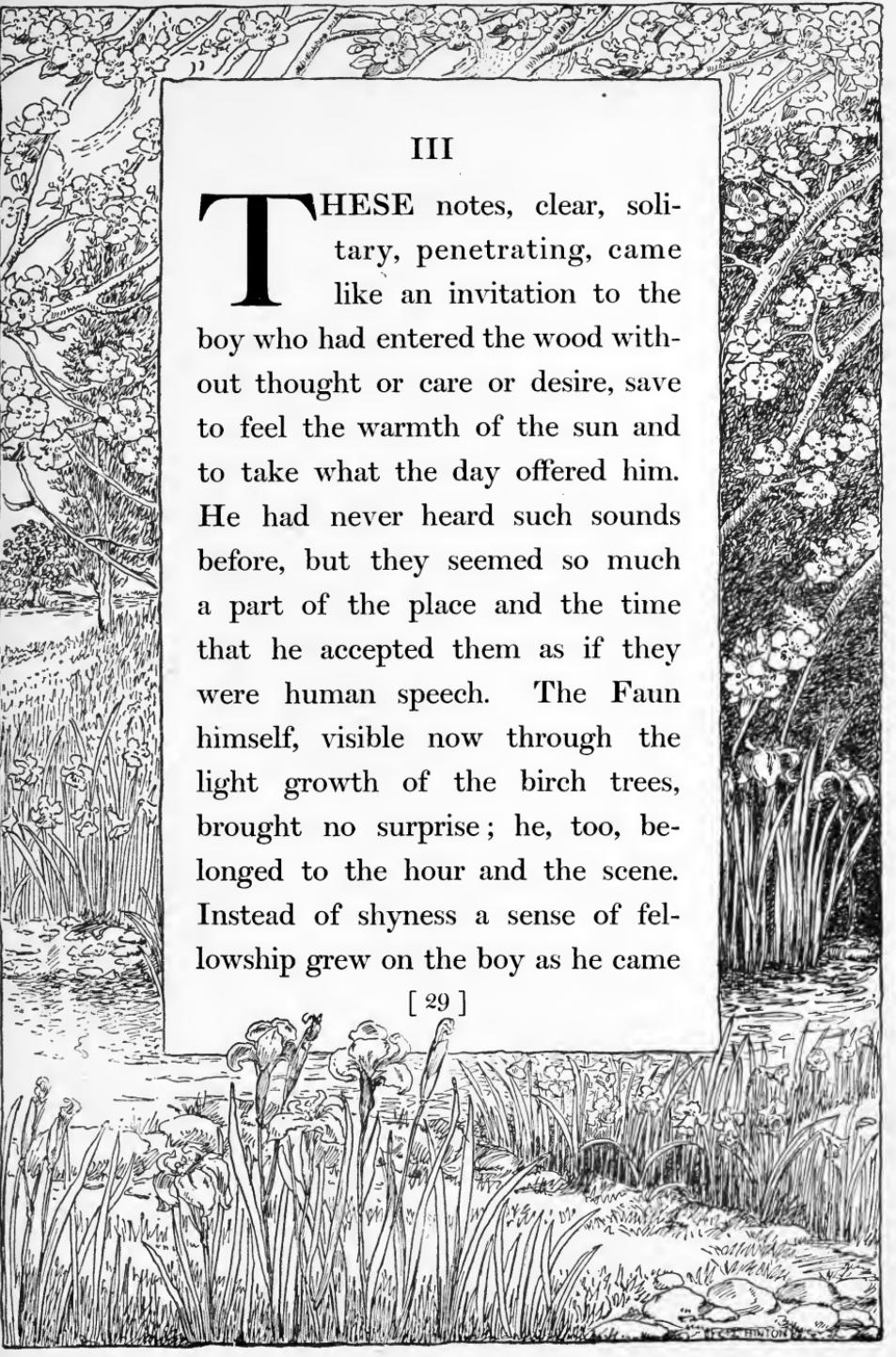


the gift of life with all creatures,
without a hint of its uses, its mean-
ing, its end, it was the song of life
when it knows that it is life and
all the instincts, passions, and de-
sires awake and fulfil themselves.





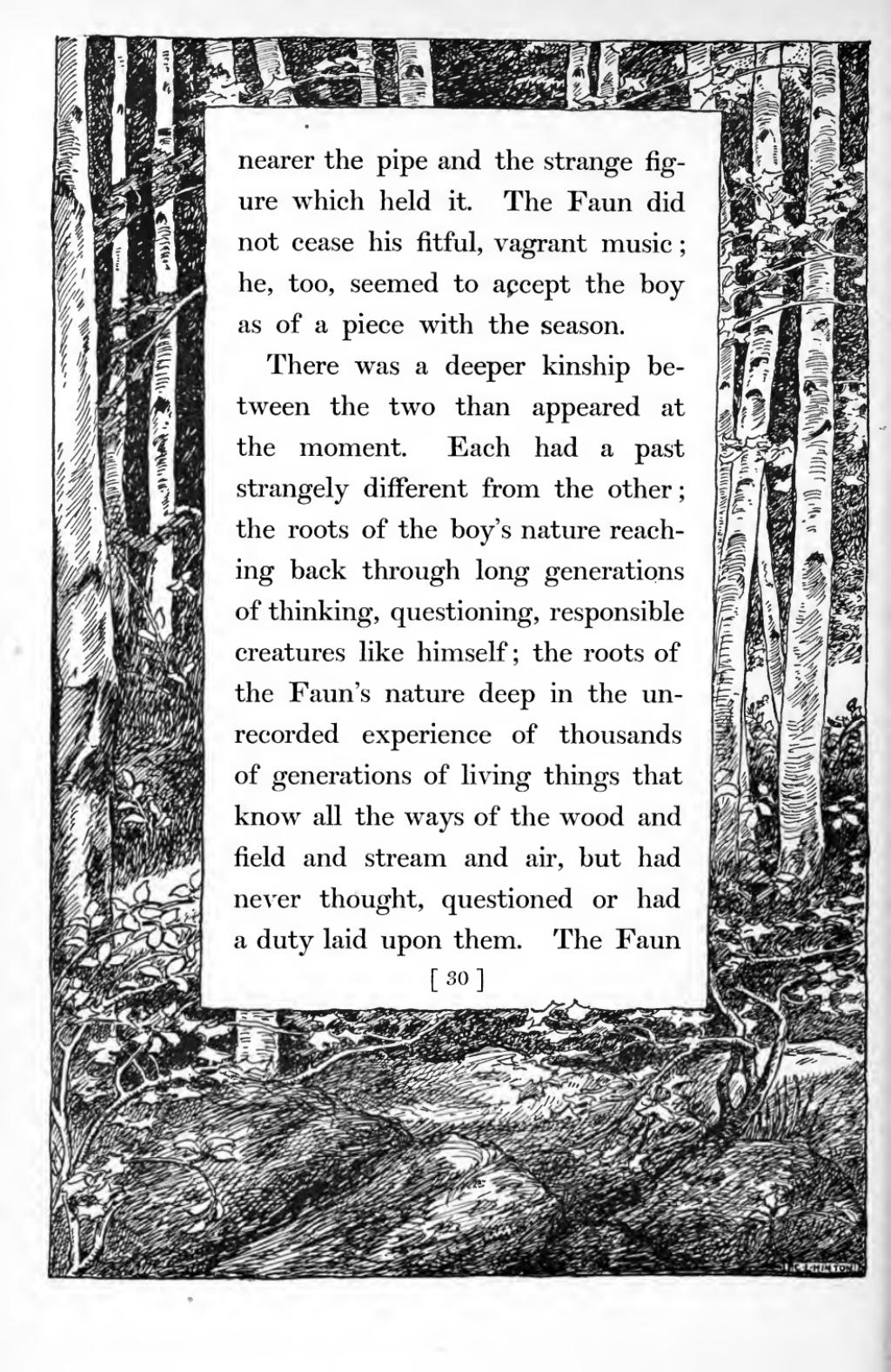
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III

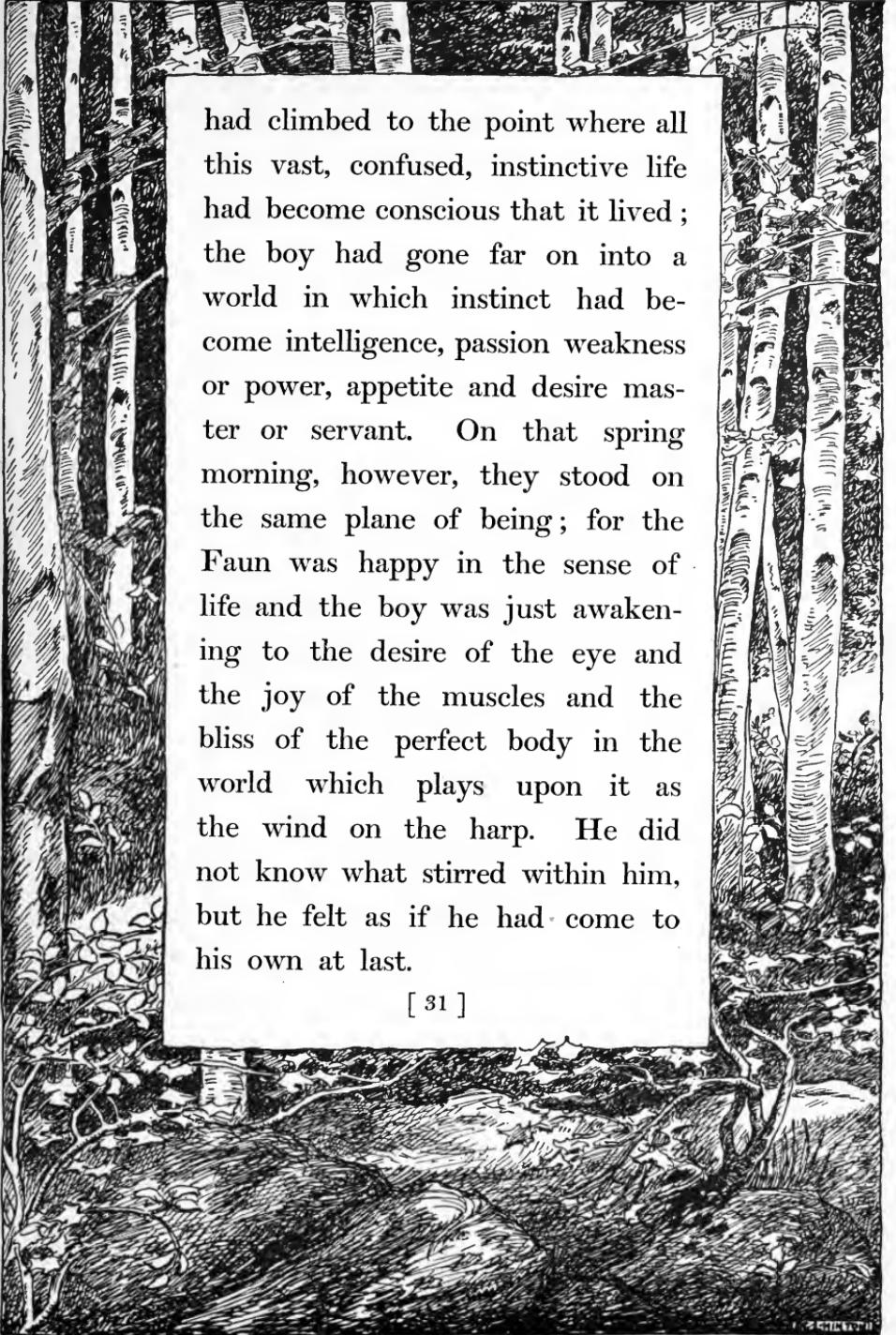
THESE notes, clear, solitary, penetrating, came like an invitation to the boy who had entered the wood without thought or care or desire, save to feel the warmth of the sun and to take what the day offered him. He had never heard such sounds before, but they seemed so much a part of the place and the time that he accepted them as if they were human speech. The Faun himself, visible now through the light growth of the birch trees, brought no surprise; he, too, belonged to the hour and the scene. Instead of shyness a sense of fellowship grew on the boy as he came

[29]



nearer the pipe and the strange figure which held it. The Faun did not cease his fitful, vagrant music ; he, too, seemed to accept the boy as of a piece with the season.

There was a deeper kinship between the two than appeared at the moment. Each had a past strangely different from the other ; the roots of the boy's nature reaching back through long generations of thinking, questioning, responsible creatures like himself ; the roots of the Faun's nature deep in the unrecorded experience of thousands of generations of living things that know all the ways of the wood and field and stream and air, but had never thought, questioned or had a duty laid upon them. The Faun



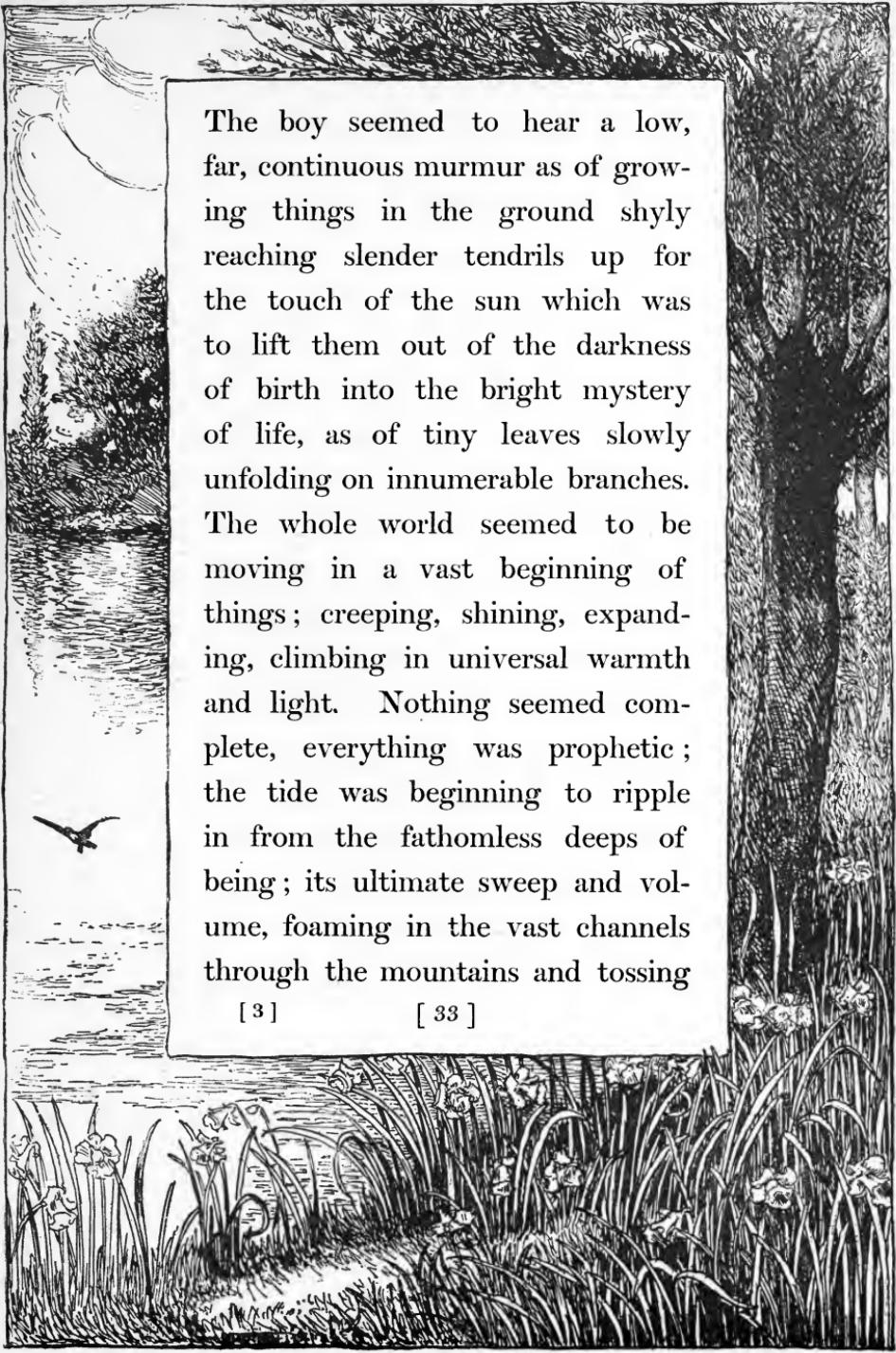
had climbed to the point where all this vast, confused, instinctive life had become conscious that it lived ; the boy had gone far on into a world in which instinct had become intelligence, passion weakness or power, appetite and desire master or servant. On that spring morning, however, they stood on the same plane of being ; for the Faun was happy in the sense of life and the boy was just awaking to the desire of the eye and the joy of the muscles and the bliss of the perfect body in the world which plays upon it as the wind on the harp. He did not know what stirred within him, but he felt as if he had come to his own at last.



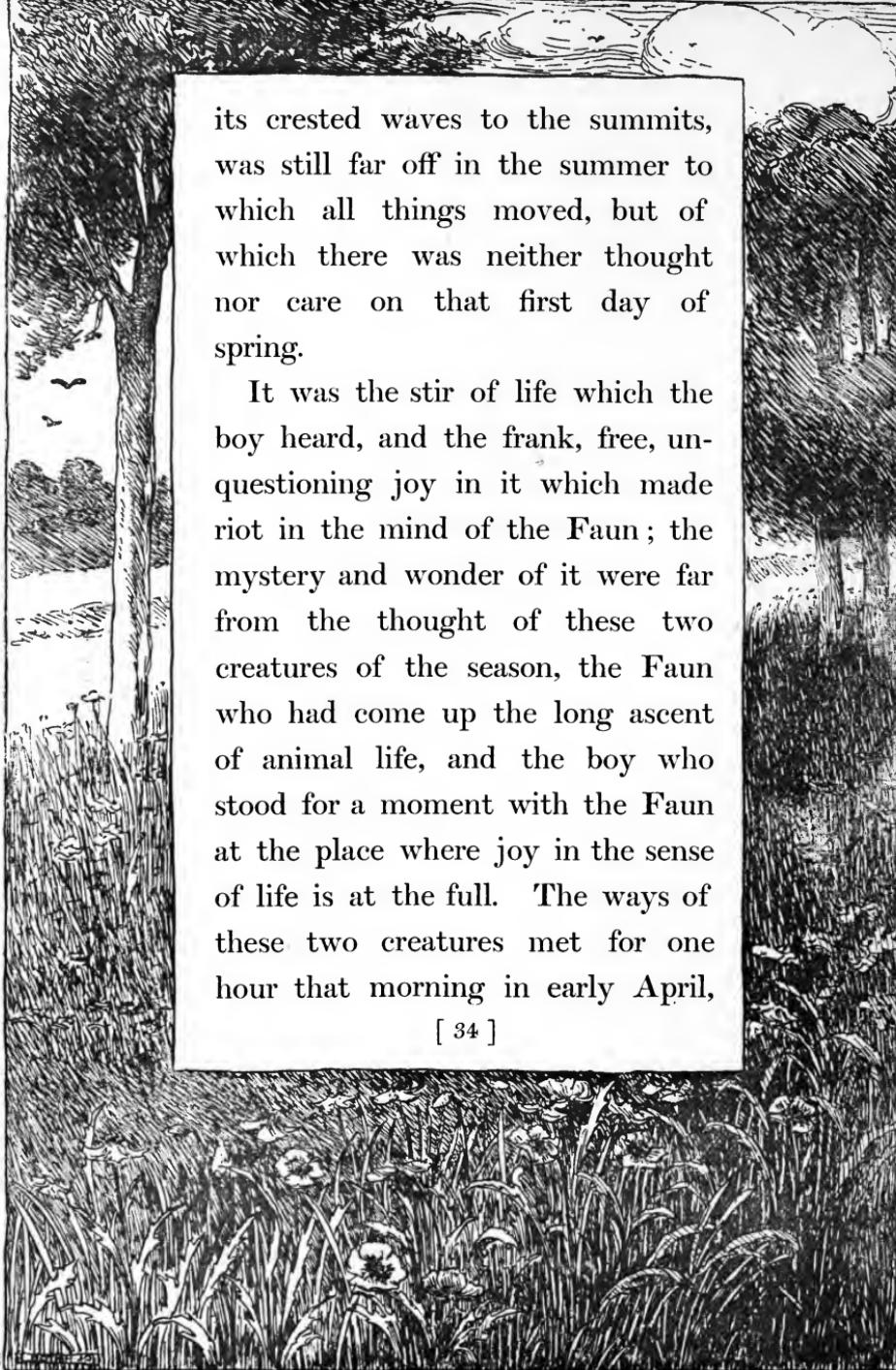
The notes of the pipe floated through the wood and were sent back in echoes from the hillside, with bird-notes intermingled, and the soft murmurs of tree tops gently swayed, and the faint tones of water falling from rock to rock hidden by a press of ferns and softened by mosses. The boy threw himself at the Faun's feet and listened; and as he listened the whole world seemed to come to life about him and move together in sheer delight in the cherishing of the sun and the caressing of the clouds. The woods were full of nesting birds; through the trees delicate patterings of feet were heard, as if the creatures who lived in the coverts and hidden places were abroad without fear.

[32]



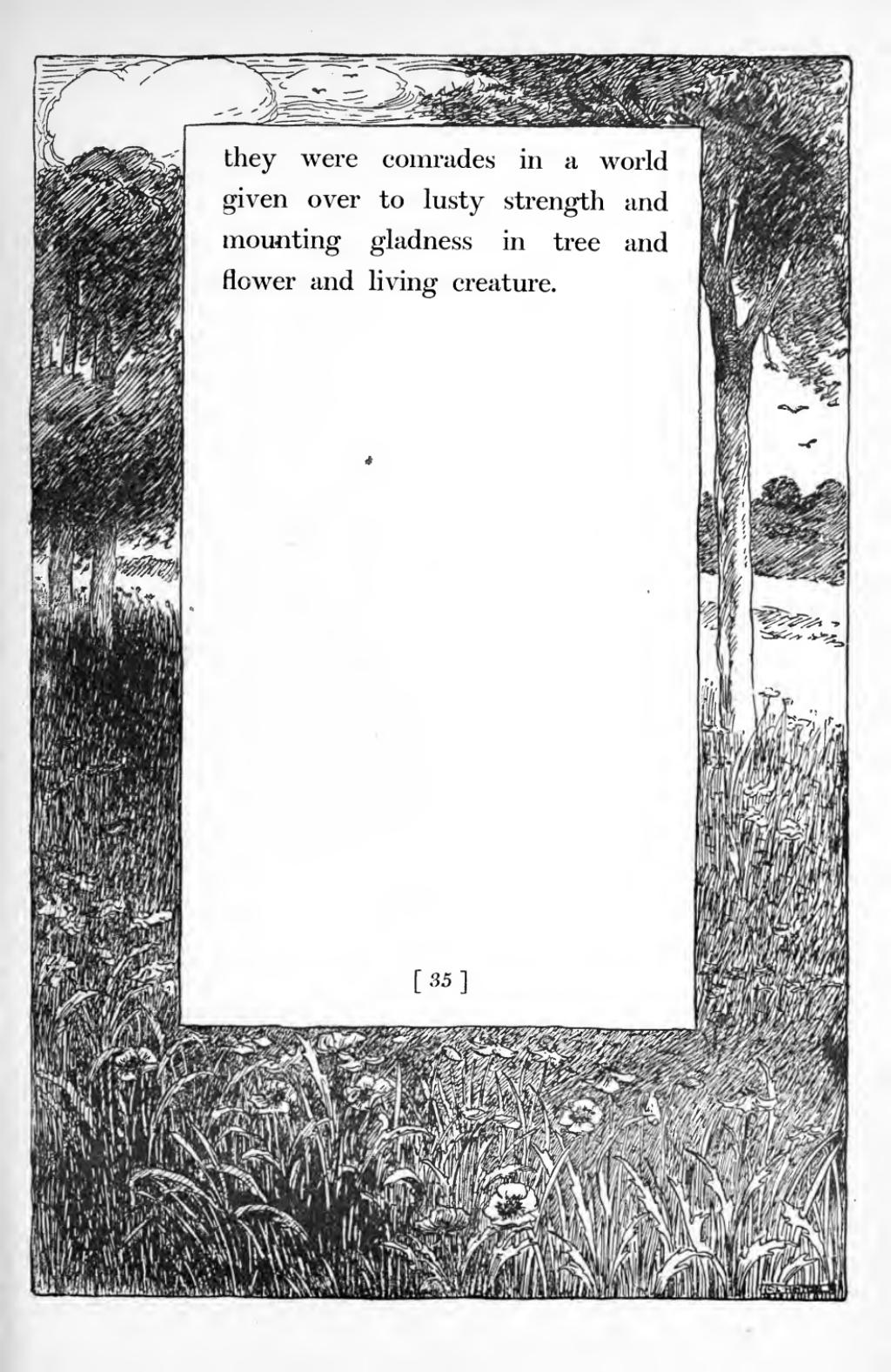


The boy seemed to hear a low, far, continuous murmur as of growing things in the ground shyly reaching slender tendrils up for the touch of the sun which was to lift them out of the darkness of birth into the bright mystery of life, as of tiny leaves slowly unfolding on innumerable branches. The whole world seemed to be moving in a vast beginning of things; creeping, shining, expanding, climbing in universal warmth and light. Nothing seemed complete, everything was prophetic; the tide was beginning to ripple in from the fathomless deeps of being; its ultimate sweep and volume, foaming in the vast channels through the mountains and tossing

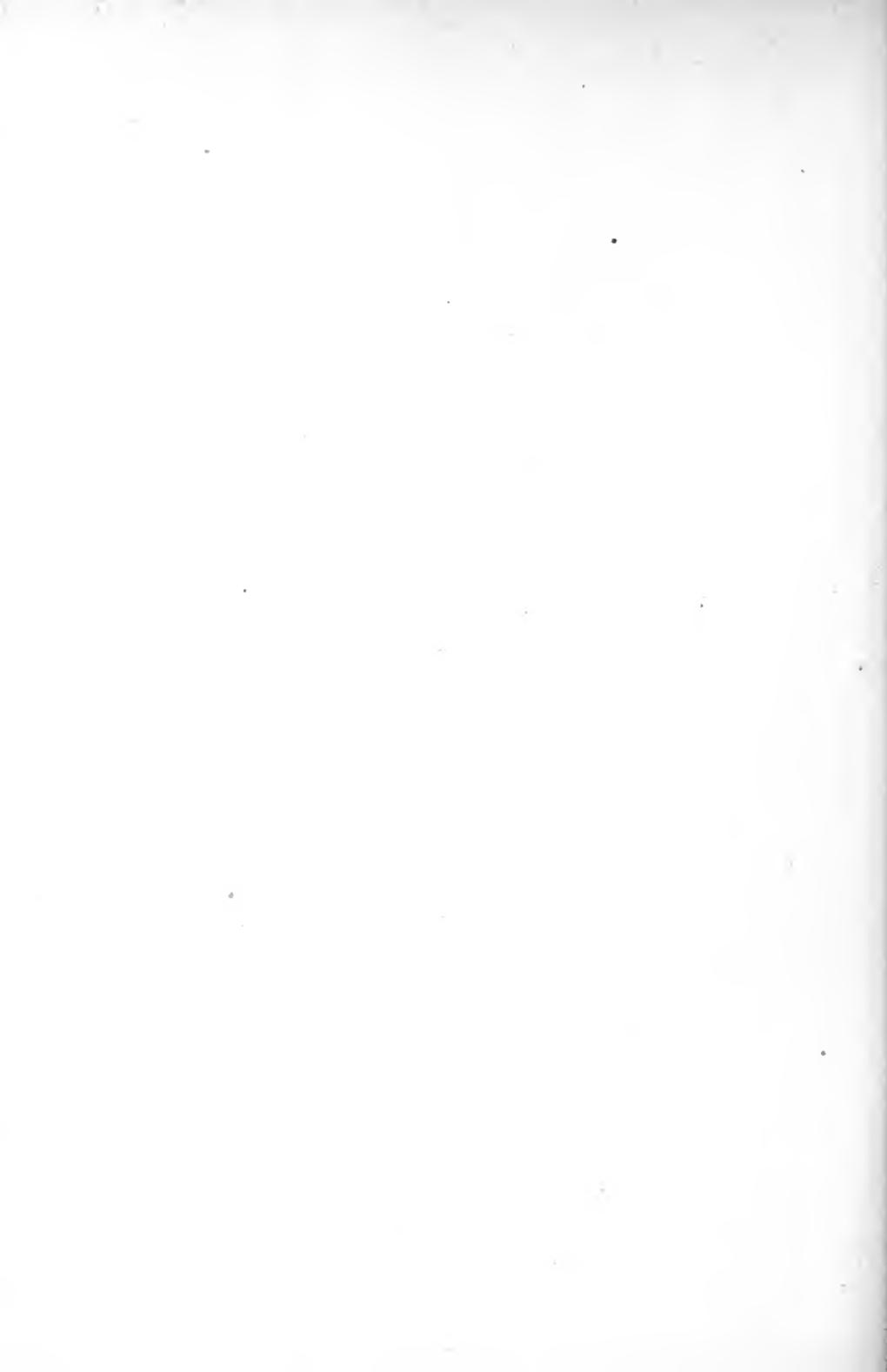


its crested waves to the summits, was still far off in the summer to which all things moved, but of which there was neither thought nor care on that first day of spring.

It was the stir of life which the boy heard, and the frank, free, unquestioning joy in it which made riot in the mind of the Faun; the mystery and wonder of it were far from the thought of these two creatures of the season, the Faun who had come up the long ascent of animal life, and the boy who stood for a moment with the Faun at the place where joy in the sense of life is at the full. The ways of these two creatures met for one hour that morning in early April,

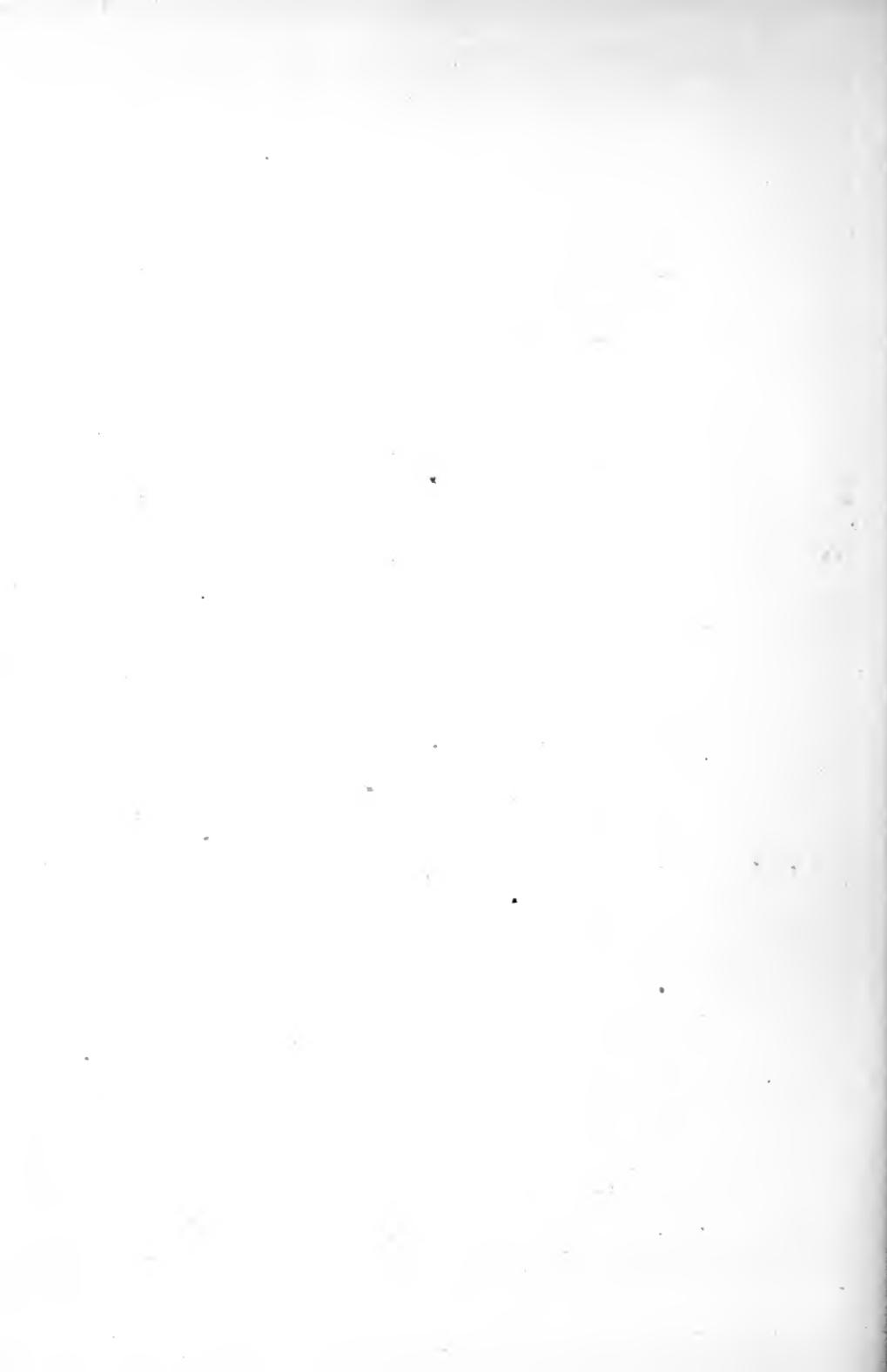


they were comrades in a world
given over to lusty strength and
mounting gladness in tree and
flower and living creature.





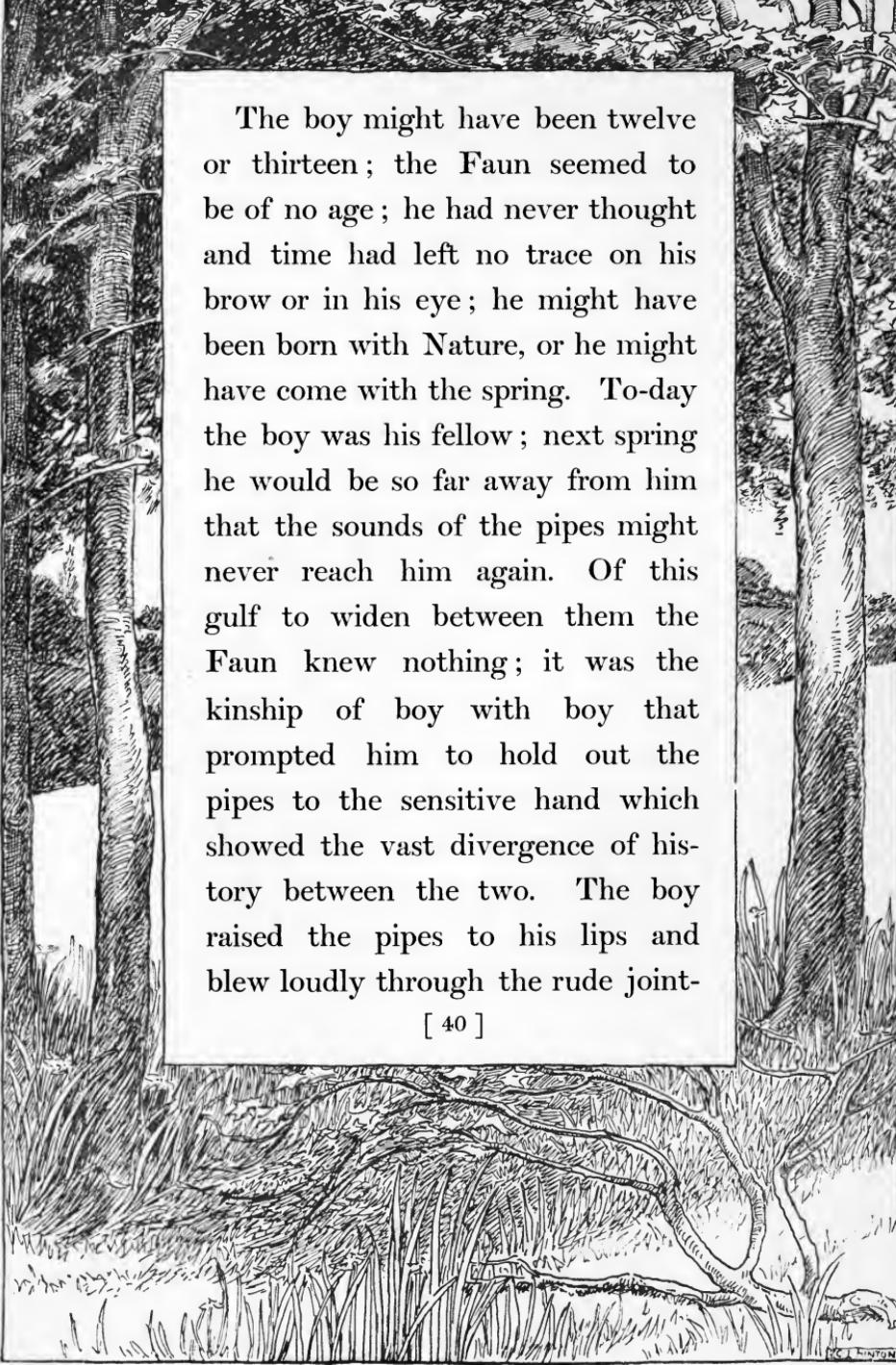
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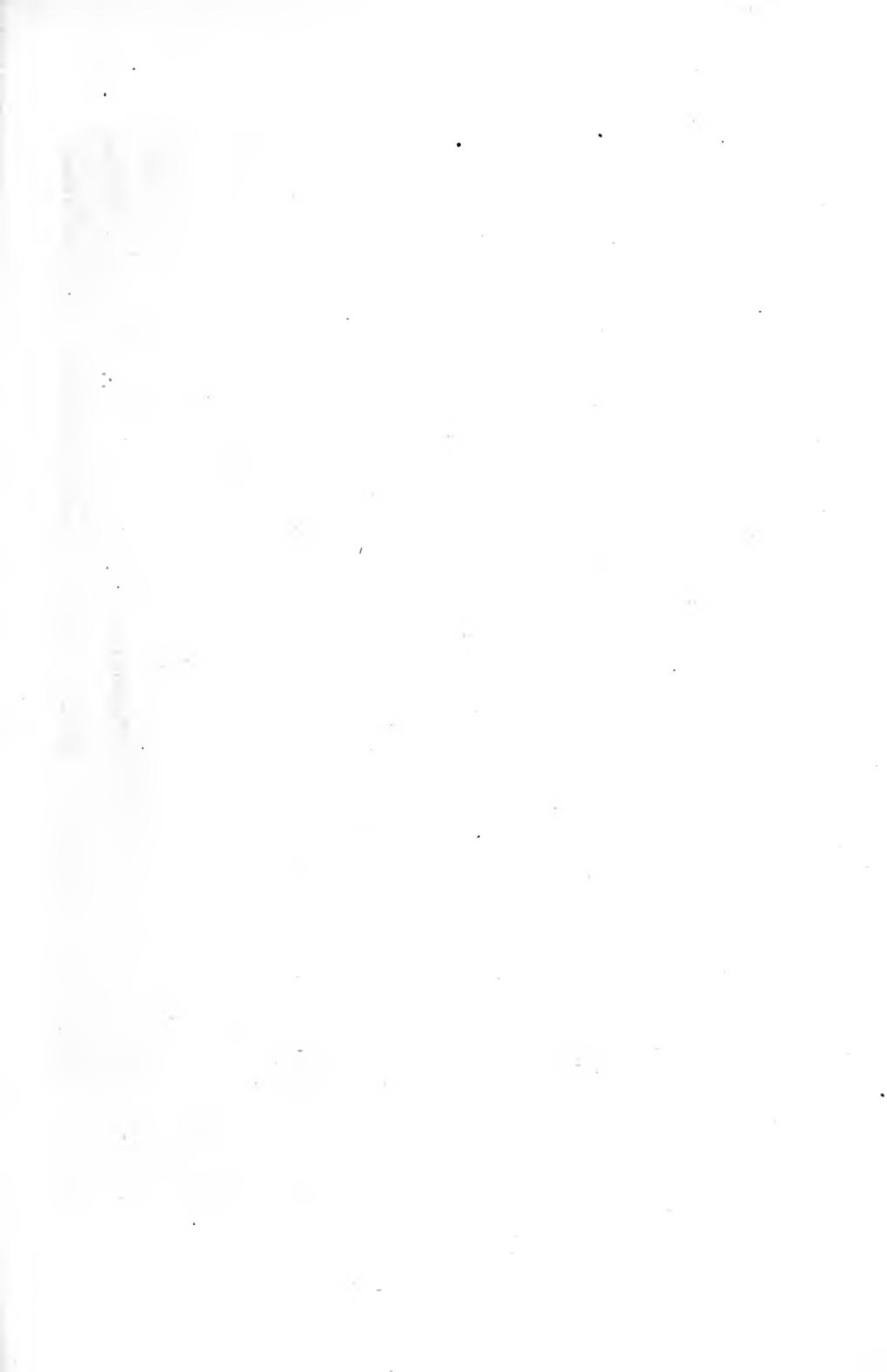
IV

TO the merry piping of the Faun the boy laughed gleefully; here was the wild playmate who could take him deeper into the woods than he had ever ventured and show him the shy creatures who were always eluding his eager search. And the Faun, who was nearer his brothers of the wood than his brothers of the thatched roof and the vine trained against the wall, saw in the boy a fellow of his own mind; to whom the wind was a challenge to kindred fleetness and the notes of the birds floating down the mountain side invitations to adventure and action.

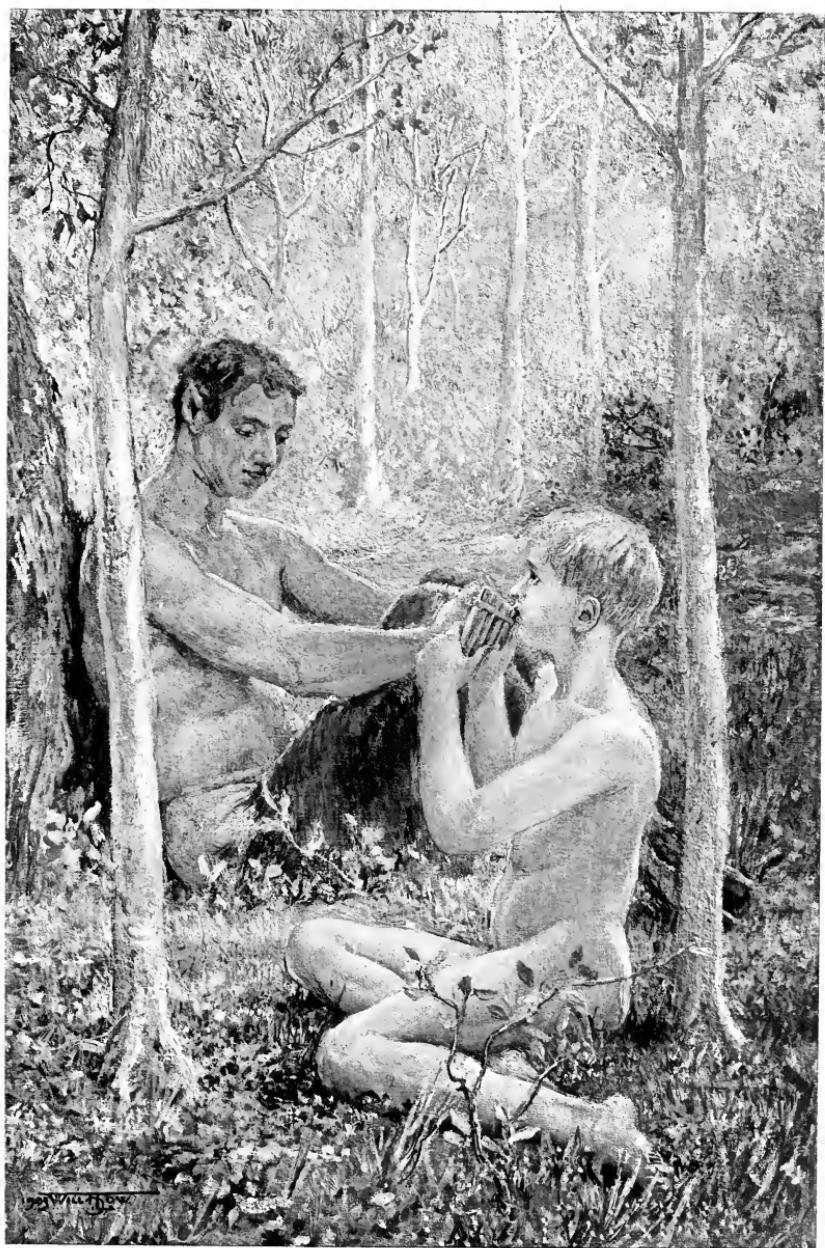
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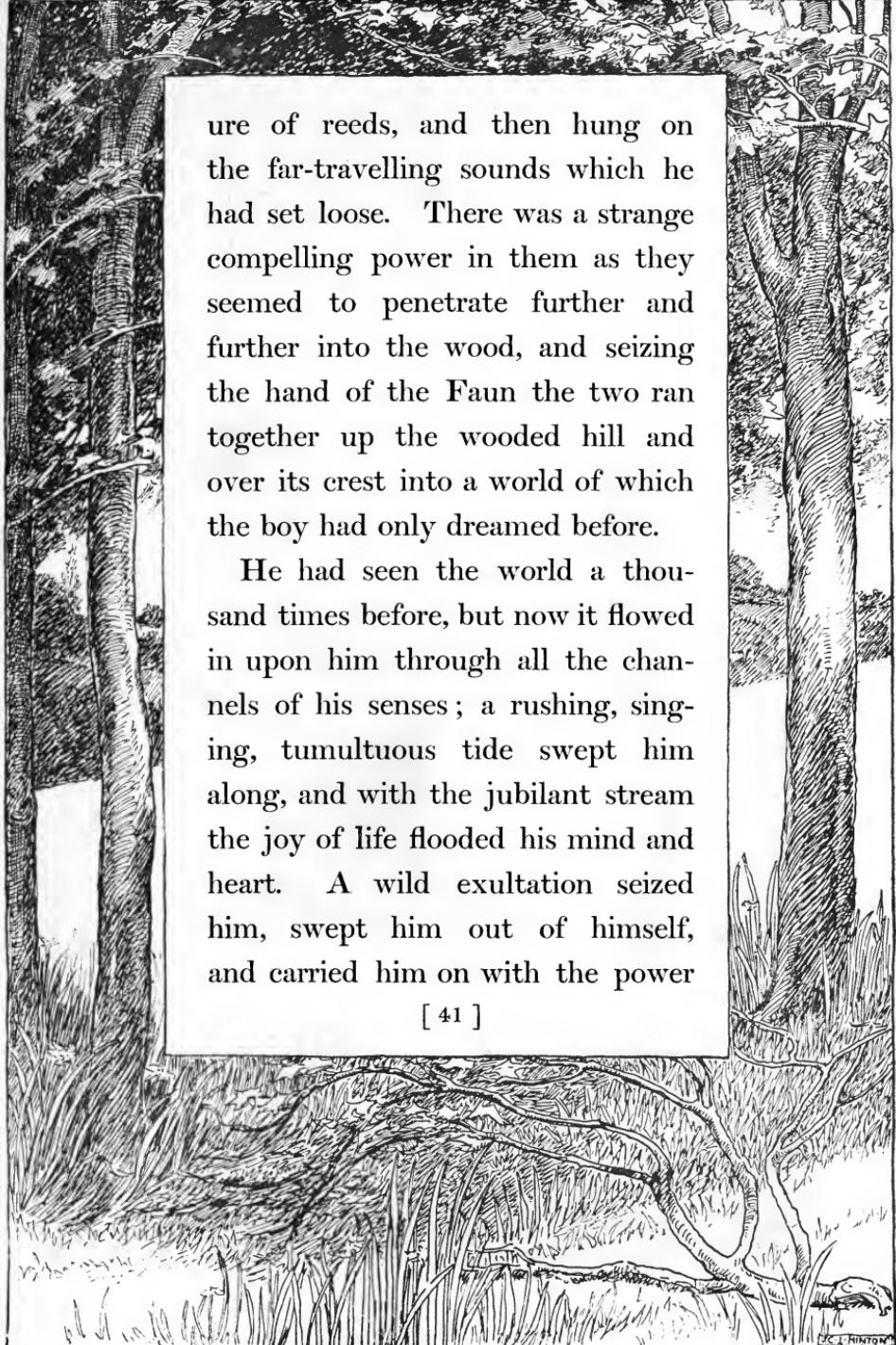
The boy might have been twelve or thirteen; the Faun seemed to be of no age; he had never thought and time had left no trace on his brow or in his eye; he might have been born with Nature, or he might have come with the spring. To-day the boy was his fellow; next spring he would be so far away from him that the sounds of the pipes might never reach him again. Of this gulf to widen between them the Faun knew nothing; it was the kinship of boy with boy that prompted him to hold out the pipes to the sensitive hand which showed the vast divergence of history between the two. The boy raised the pipes to his lips and blew loudly through the rude joint-



“The boy raised the pipes to his lips”



THE MUSEUM
ANTHROPOLOGIC



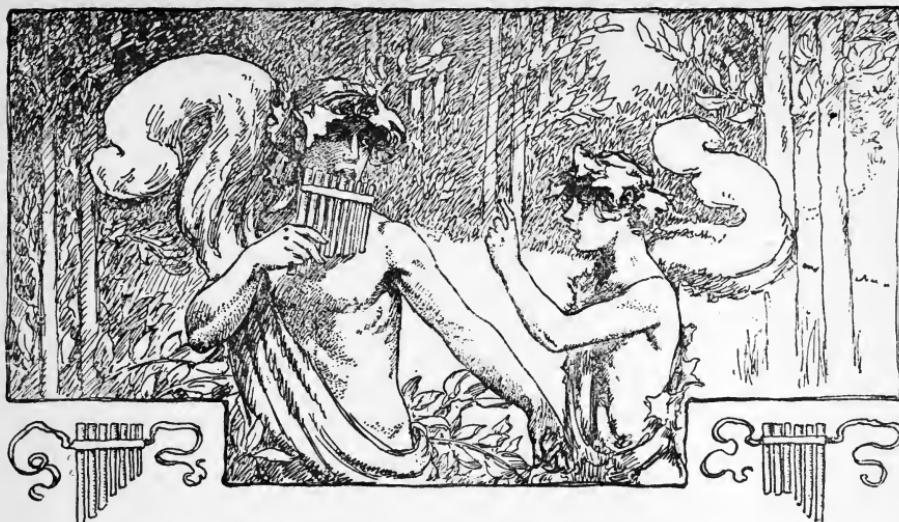
ure of reeds, and then hung on the far-travelling sounds which he had set loose. There was a strange compelling power in them as they seemed to penetrate further and further into the wood, and seizing the hand of the Faun the two ran together up the wooded hill and over its crest into a world of which the boy had only dreamed before.

He had seen the world a thousand times before, but now it flowed in upon him through all the channels of his senses ; a rushing, singing, tumultuous tide swept him along, and with the jubilant stream the joy of life flooded his mind and heart. A wild exultation seized him, swept him out of himself, and carried him on with the power



and sweep of a resistless torrent. He ran, shouted, laughed as if some hidden and inarticulate force within him had suddenly broken bounds. He was fellow with the bird that sang on the bough and comrade with the shy creatures who had never suffered his approach before.

If he had known what was happening within him he would have understood the ancient frenzy of the Bacchic worshippers ; the surrender to the spell of the life of the world, rising out of deep springs in the heart of things, calling with the potency of ancient witcheries to his instincts, taking possession of his quickening senses, and mounting with intoxicating glow to his imagination.

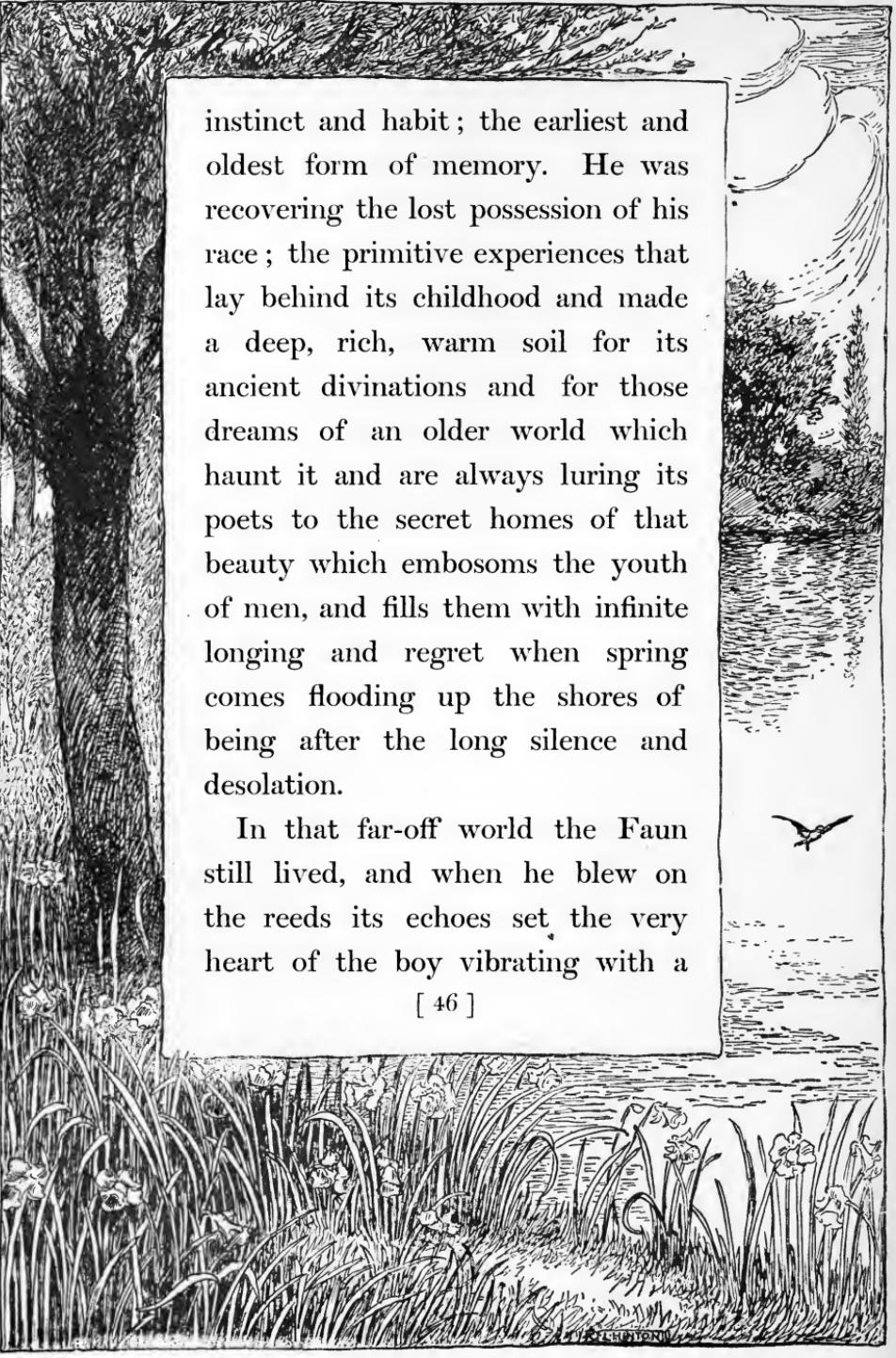


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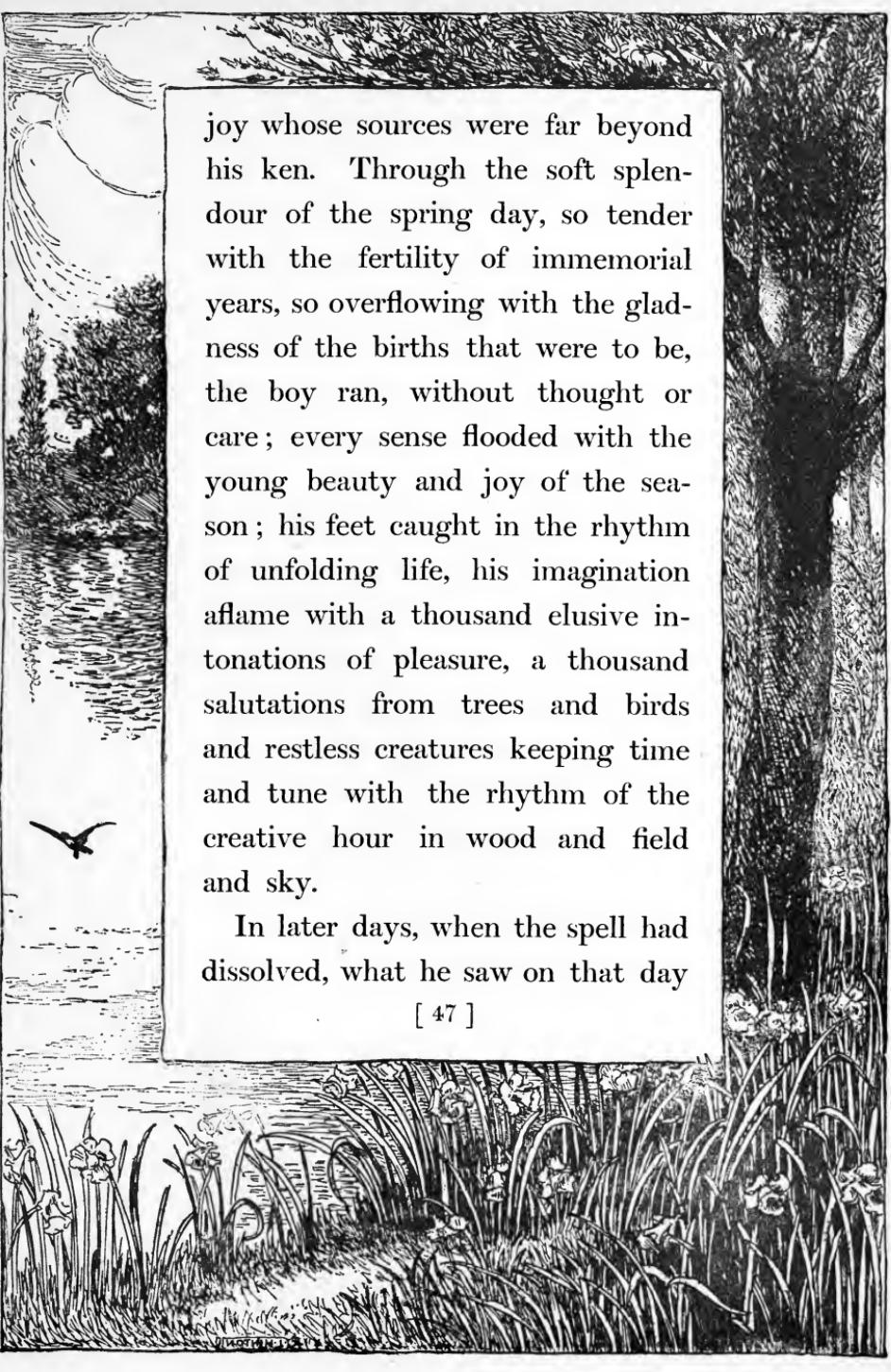
THE pipe of the Faun drew his feet far into the secret places of the woods, and with every step he seemed to be breaking some imprisonment, finding some new liberty. The Faun could have told him much of that ancient world which was old before man began to look, to wonder, to comprehend; but the wild music of those few notes, so inarticulate but so full of the unspoken life of hidden and fugitive things, spoke to his senses as no words of human speech could have spoken. They were full of echoes of a dateless past, of which no memory remained save that which was deposited in

[45]



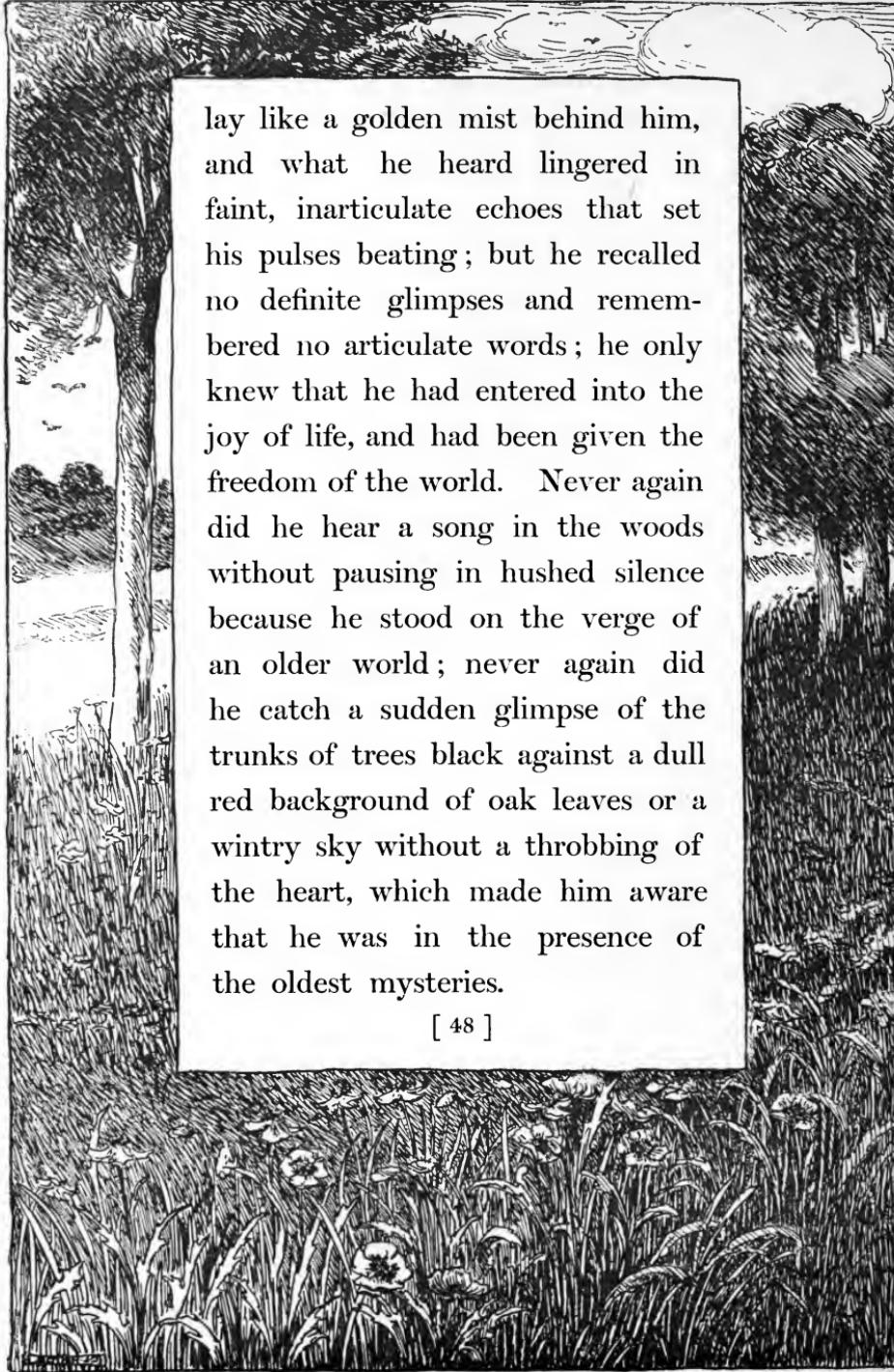
instinct and habit ; the earliest and oldest form of memory. He was recovering the lost possession of his race ; the primitive experiences that lay behind its childhood and made a deep, rich, warm soil for its ancient divinations and for those dreams of an older world which haunt it and are always luring its poets to the secret homes of that beauty which embosoms the youth of men, and fills them with infinite longing and regret when spring comes flooding up the shores of being after the long silence and desolation.

In that far-off world the Faun still lived, and when he blew on the reeds its echoes set the very heart of the boy vibrating with a

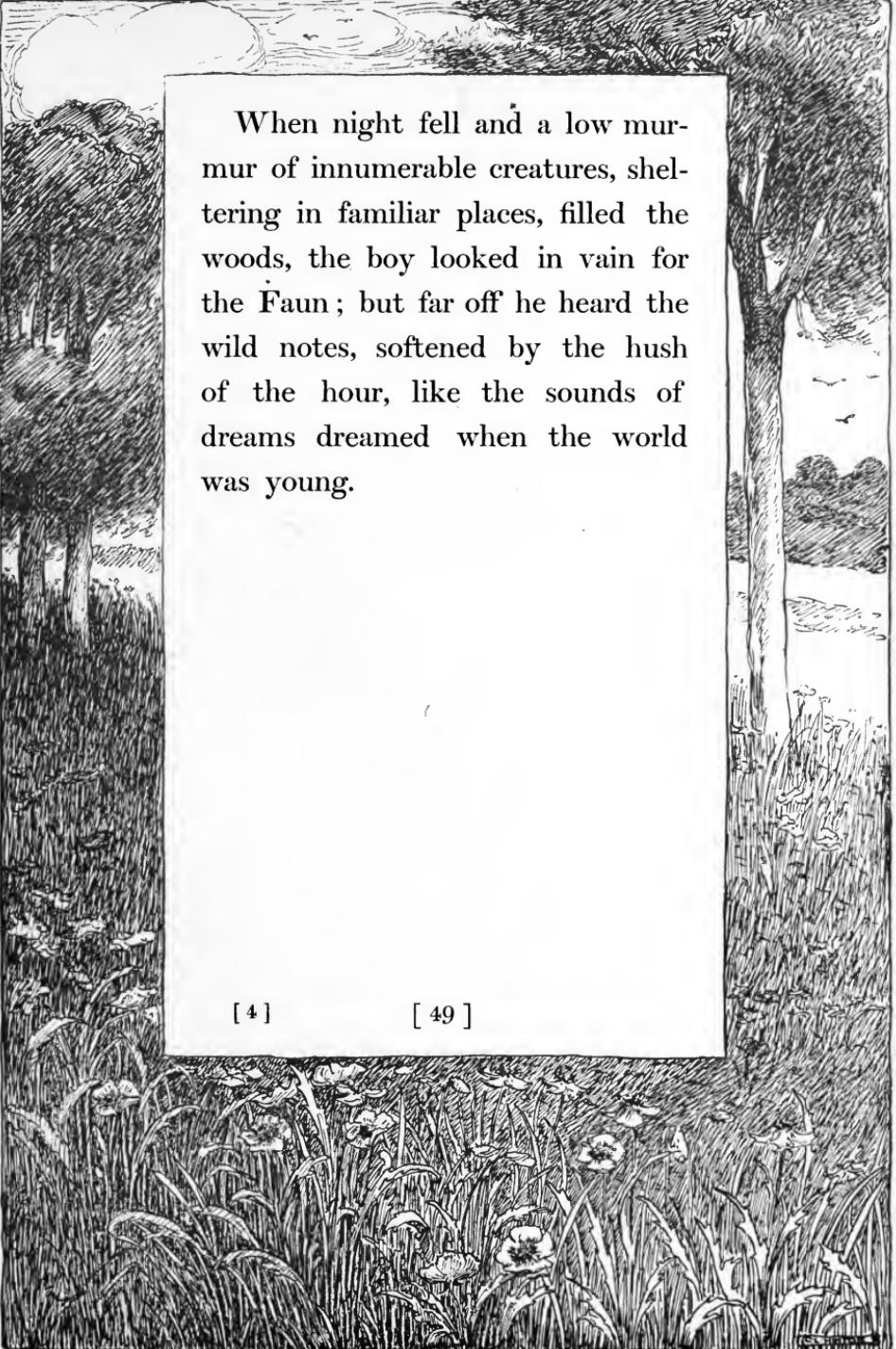


joy whose sources were far beyond his ken. Through the soft splendour of the spring day, so tender with the fertility of immemorial years, so overflowing with the gladness of the births that were to be, the boy ran, without thought or care; every sense flooded with the young beauty and joy of the season; his feet caught in the rhythm of unfolding life, his imagination aflame with a thousand elusive intonations of pleasure, a thousand salutations from trees and birds and restless creatures keeping time and tune with the rhythm of the creative hour in wood and field and sky.

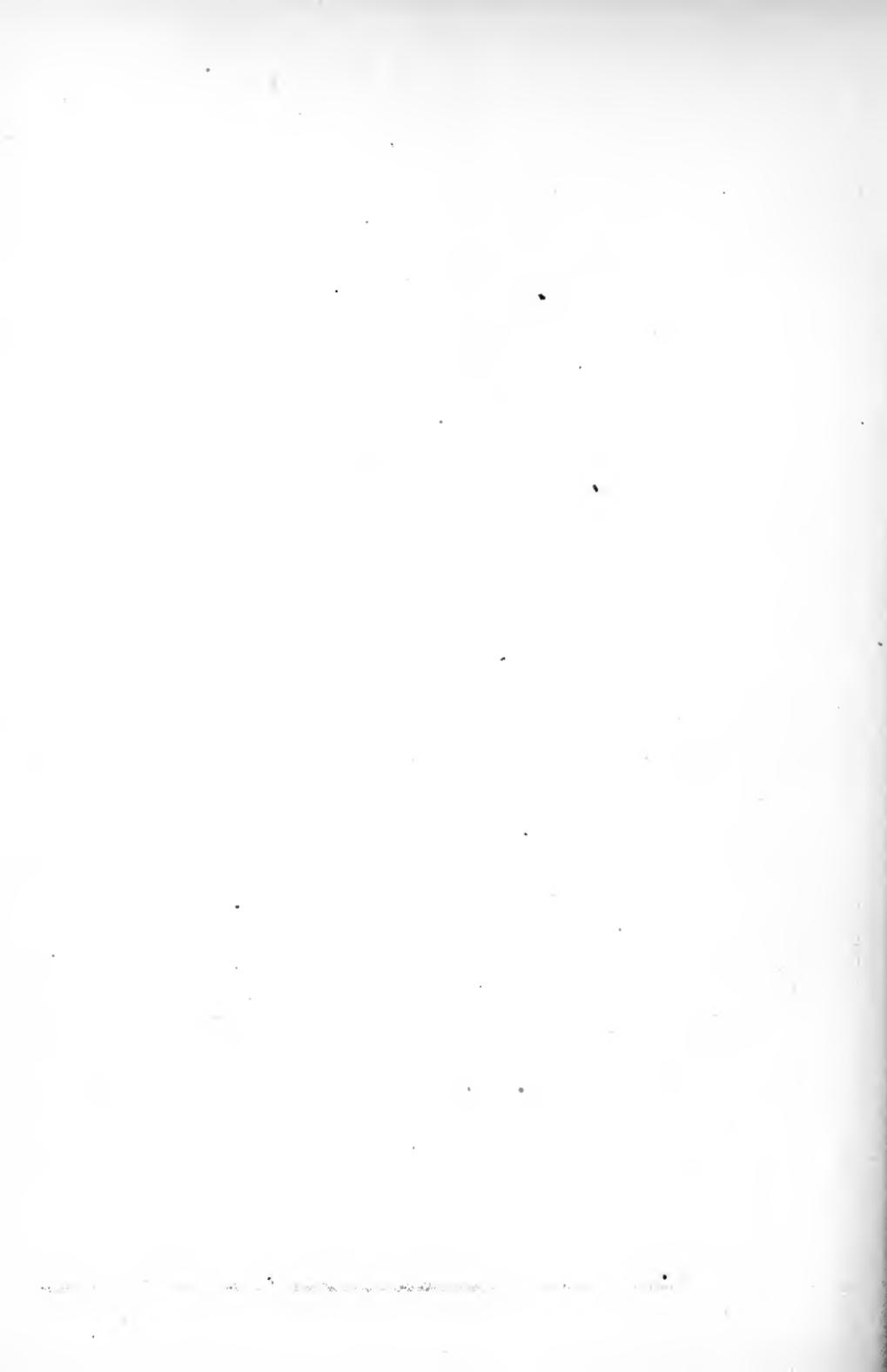
In later days, when the spell had dissolved, what he saw on that day



lay like a golden mist behind him, and what he heard lingered in faint, inarticulate echoes that set his pulses beating ; but he recalled no definite glimpses and remembered no articulate words ; he only knew that he had entered into the joy of life, and had been given the freedom of the world. Never again did he hear a song in the woods without pausing in hushed silence because he stood on the verge of an older world ; never again did he catch a sudden glimpse of the trunks of trees black against a dull red background of oak leaves or a wintry sky without a throbbing of the heart, which made him aware that he was in the presence of the oldest mysteries.



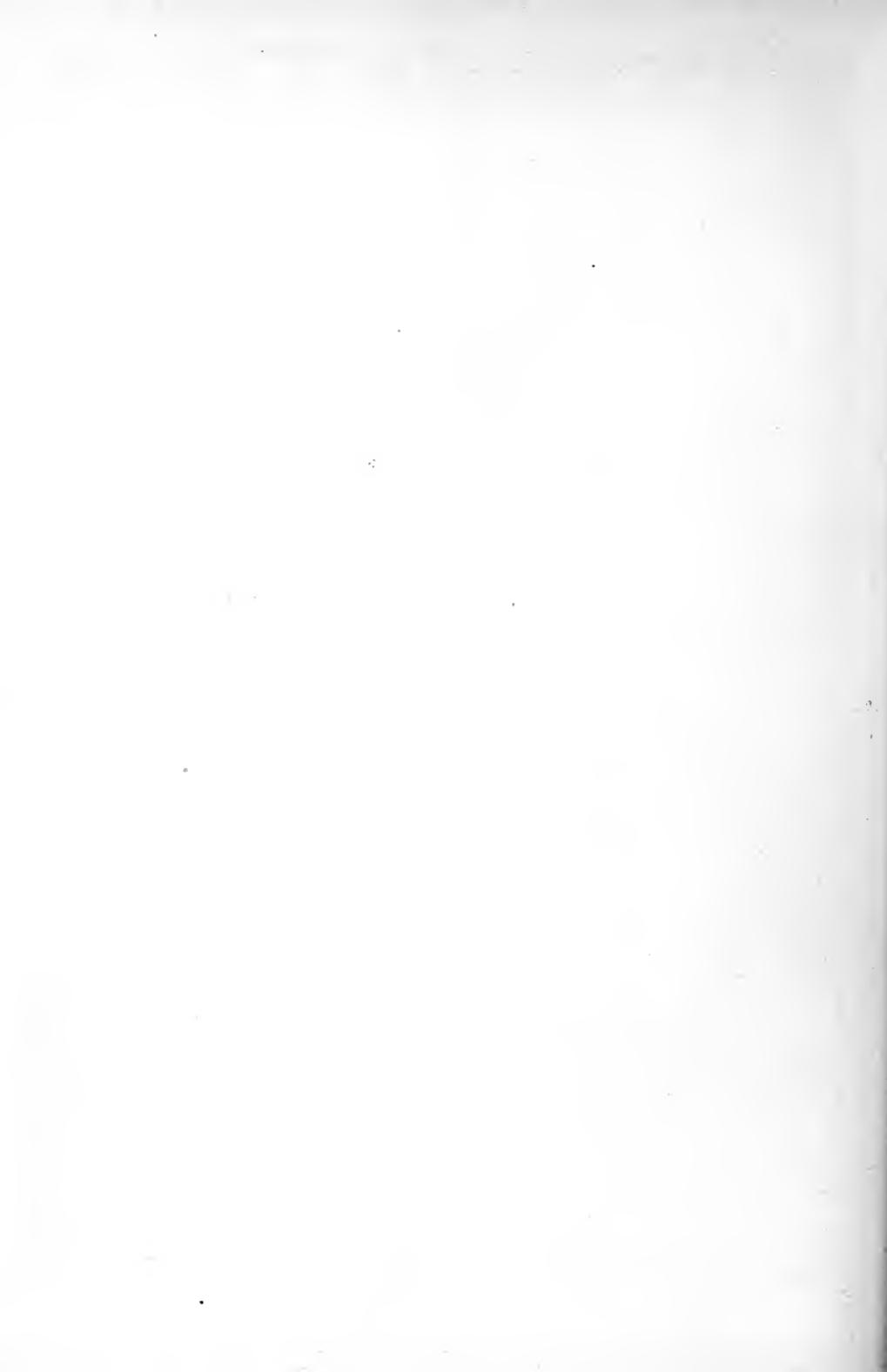
When night fell and a low murmur of innumerable creatures, sheltering in familiar places, filled the woods, the boy looked in vain for the Faun ; but far off he heard the wild notes, softened by the hush of the hour, like the sounds of dreams dreamed when the world was young.





THE LYRE OF APOLLO

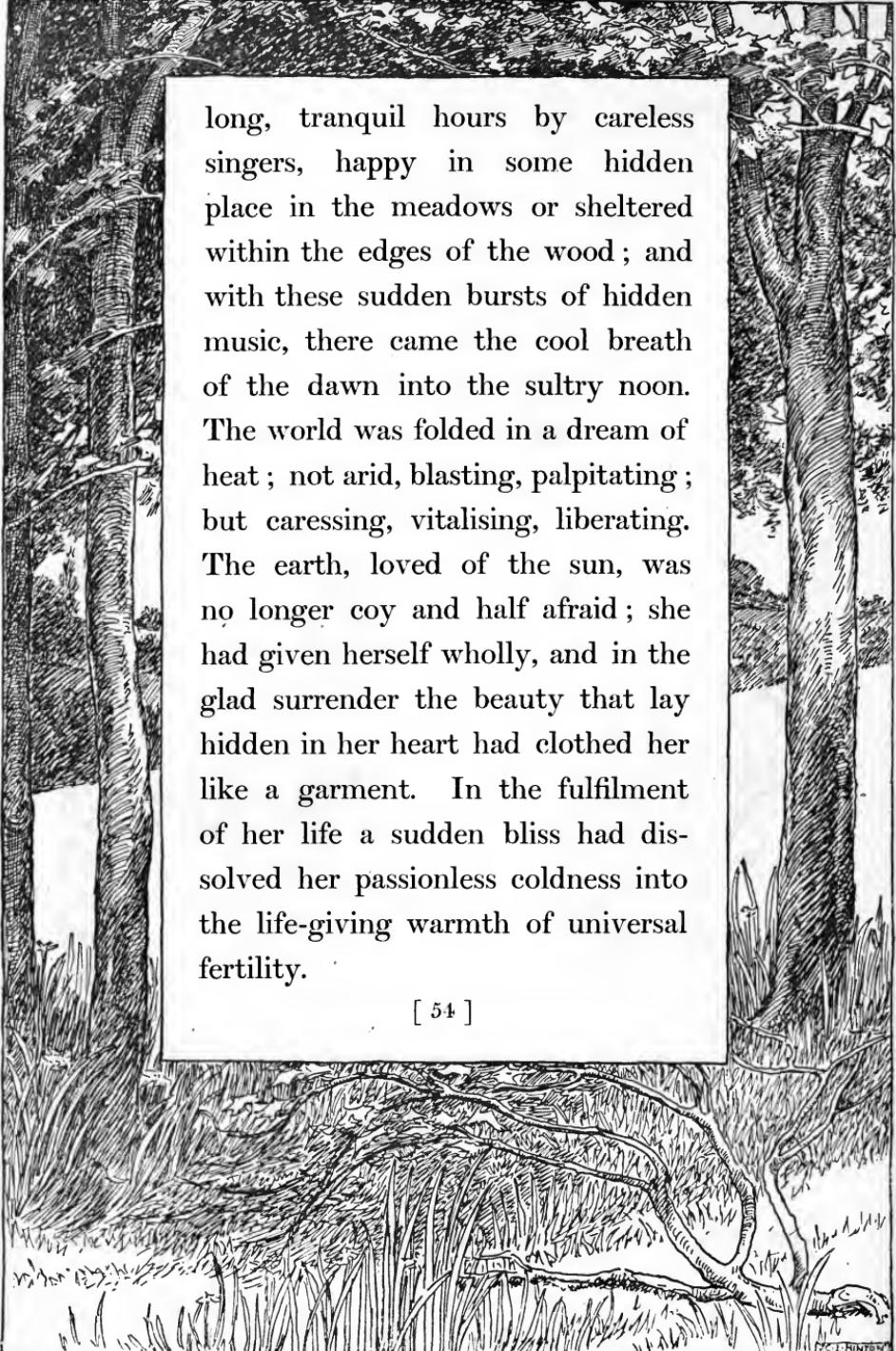
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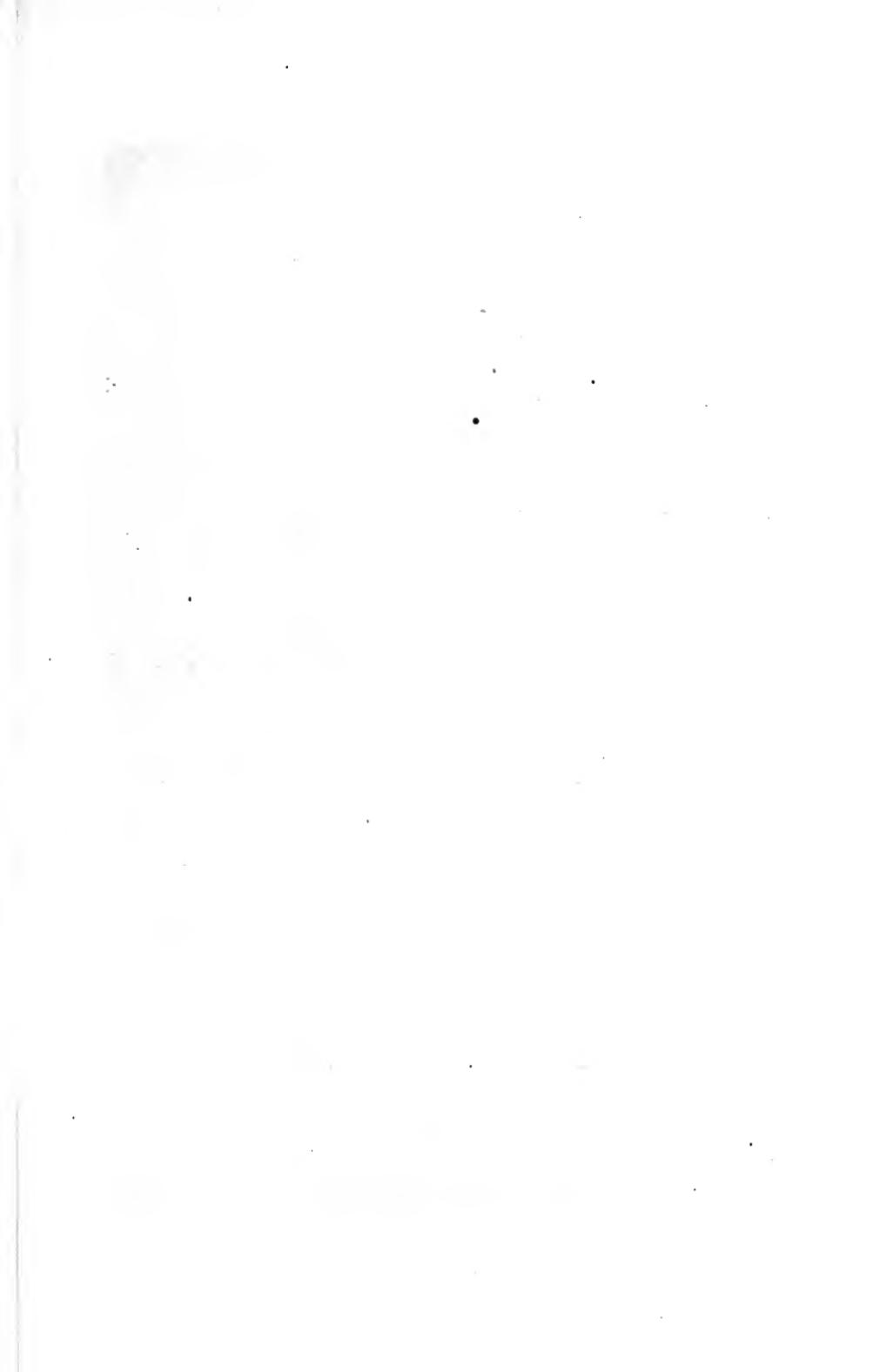
I

IT was mid-June and the world was in flower. The delicate promise of April, when the pipes of the Faun echoed in the depths of woods faintly touched with the tenderest green, was fulfilled in a mass and ripeness of foliage which had parted with none of its freshness, but had become like a sea of moving and whispering greenness. The delicious heat of the early summer evoked a vagrant and elusive fragrance from the young grasses starred with flowers. The morning songs, which made the break of day throb with an ecstasy of melody, were caught up again and again through the

[53]



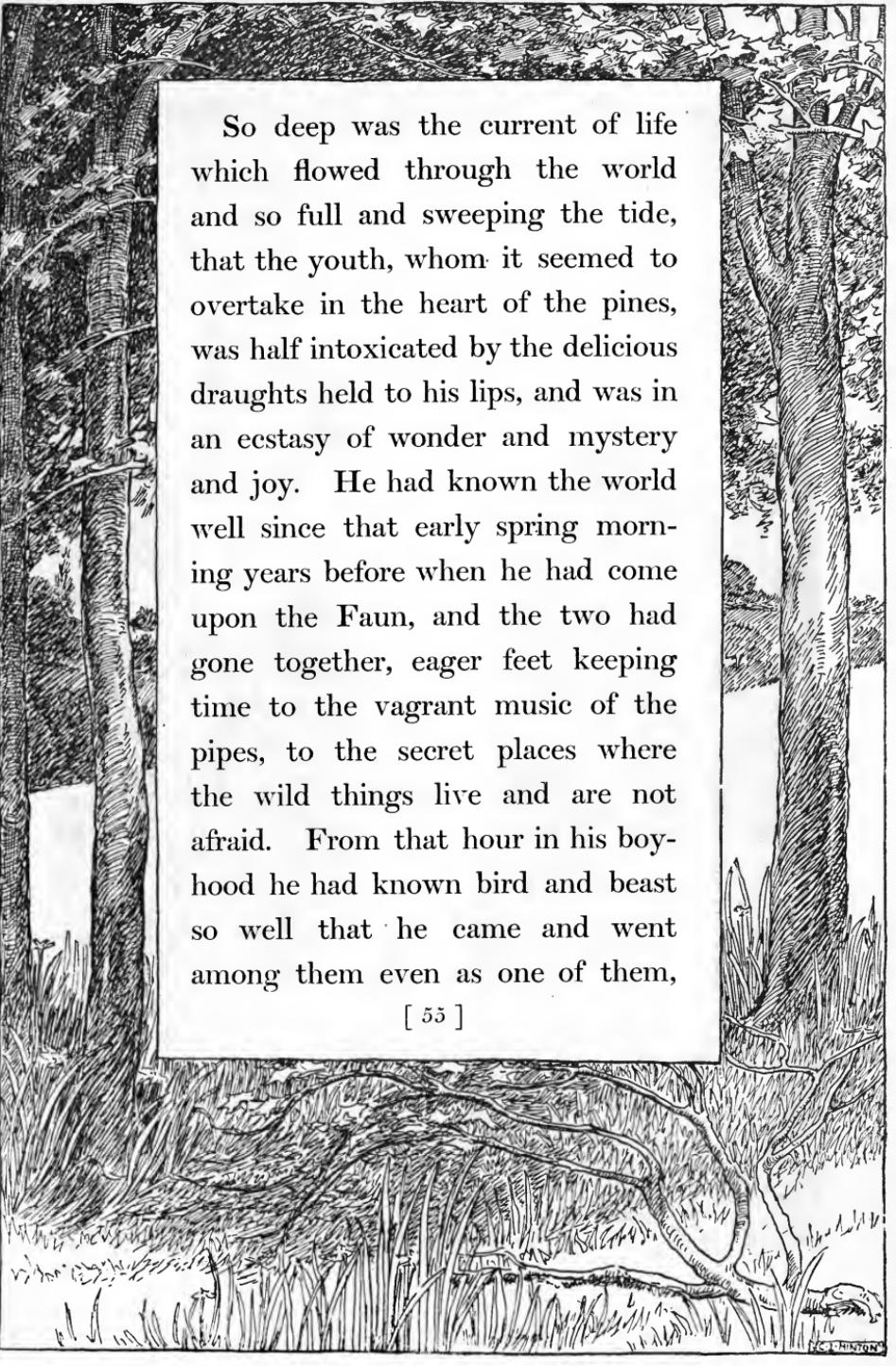
long, tranquil hours by careless singers, happy in some hidden place in the meadows or sheltered within the edges of the wood ; and with these sudden bursts of hidden music, there came the cool breath of the dawn into the sultry noon. The world was folded in a dream of heat ; not arid, blasting, palpitating ; but caressing, vitalising, liberating. The earth, loved of the sun, was no longer coy and half afraid ; she had given herself wholly, and in the glad surrender the beauty that lay hidden in her heart had clothed her like a garment. In the fulfilment of her life a sudden bliss had dissolved her passionless coldness into the life-giving warmth of universal fertility.



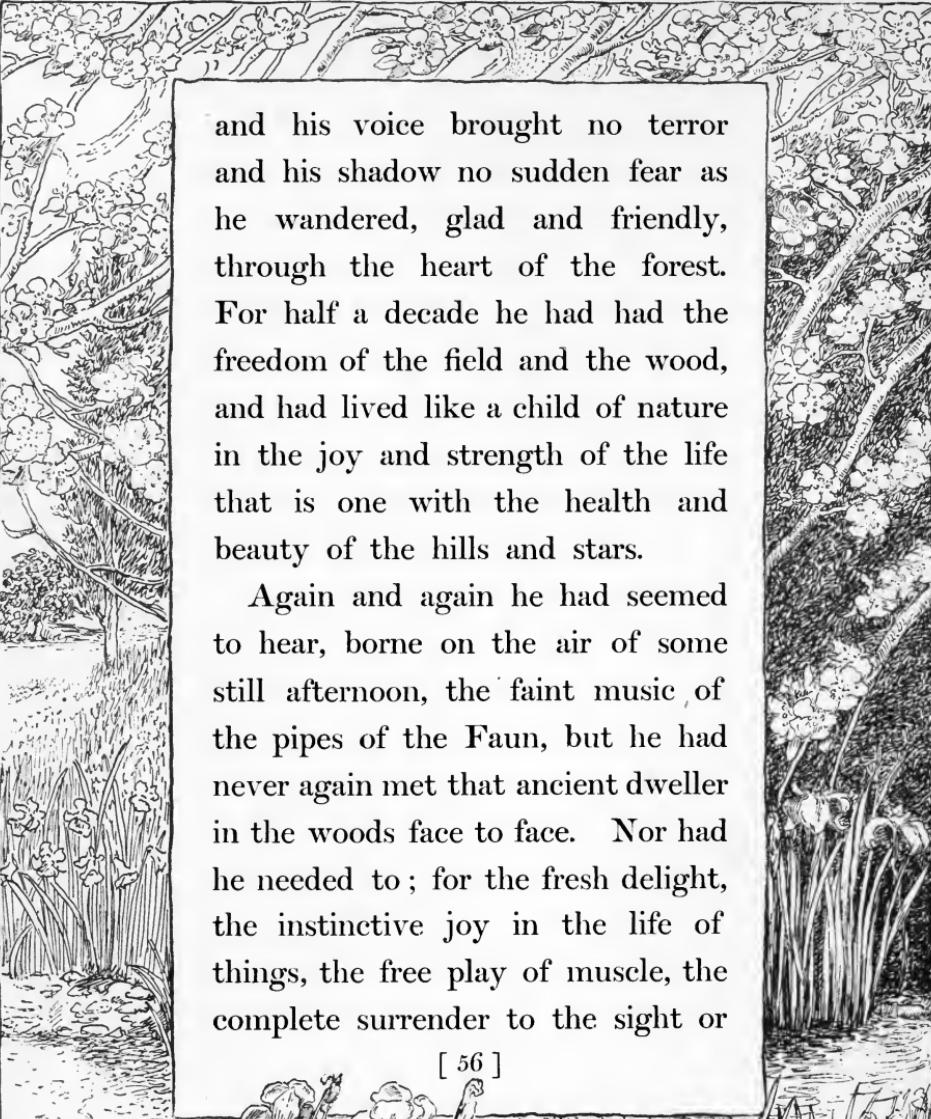
The Lyre of Apollo



ЧО МИЧІ
АМЯОЦІА?

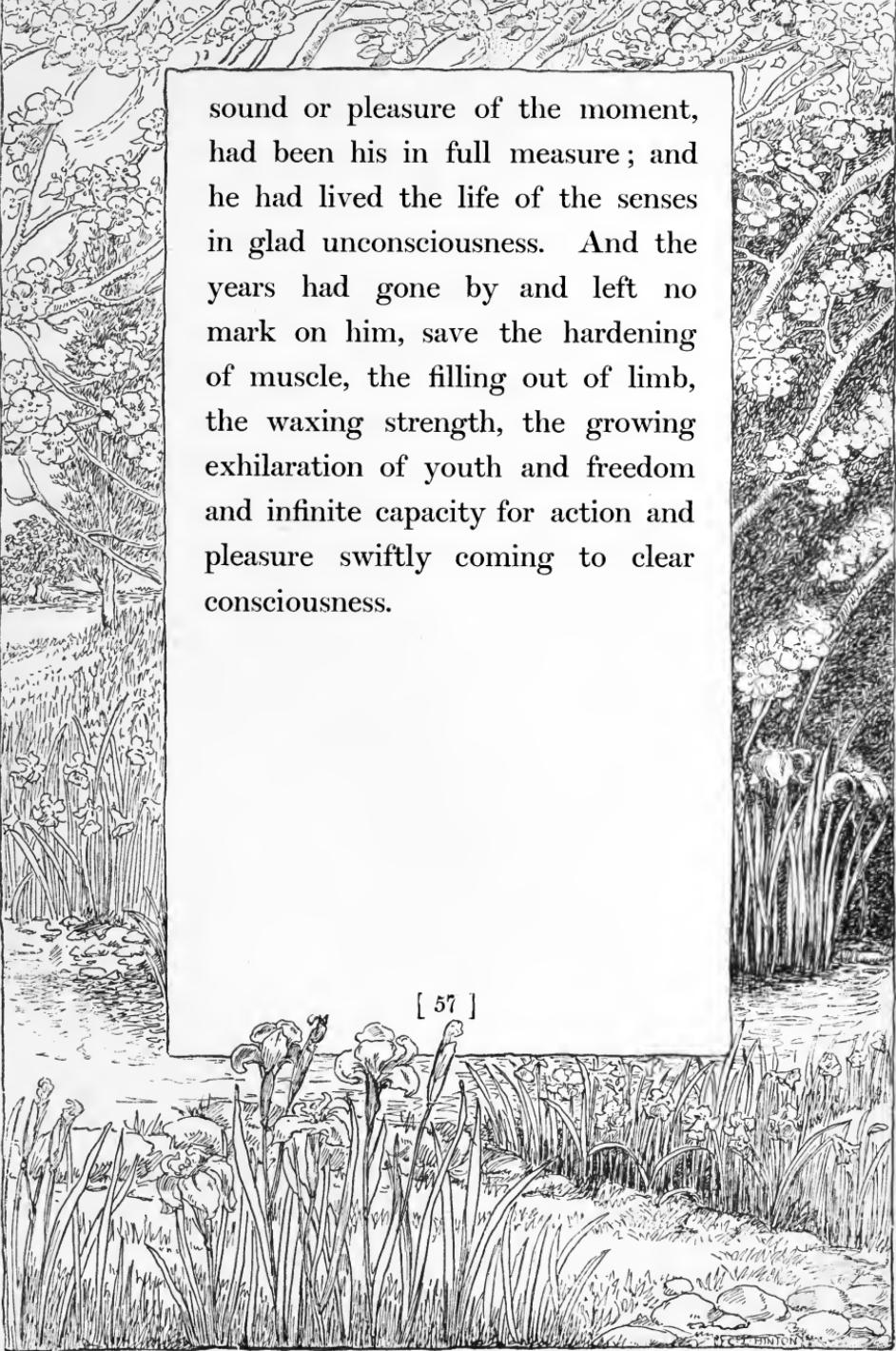


So deep was the current of life which flowed through the world and so full and sweeping the tide, that the youth, whom it seemed to overtake in the heart of the pines, was half intoxicated by the delicious draughts held to his lips, and was in an ecstasy of wonder and mystery and joy. He had known the world well since that early spring morning years before when he had come upon the Faun, and the two had gone together, eager feet keeping time to the vagrant music of the pipes, to the secret places where the wild things live and are not afraid. From that hour in his boyhood he had known bird and beast so well that he came and went among them even as one of them,

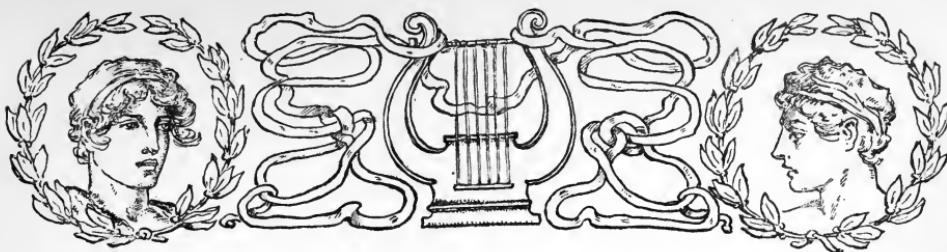


and his voice brought no terror
and his shadow no sudden fear as
he wandered, glad and friendly,
through the heart of the forest.
For half a decade he had had the
freedom of the field and the wood,
and had lived like a child of nature
in the joy and strength of the life
that is one with the health and
beauty of the hills and stars.

Again and again he had seemed
to hear, borne on the air of some
still afternoon, the faint music of
the pipes of the Faun, but he had
never again met that ancient dweller
in the woods face to face. Nor had
he needed to ; for the fresh delight,
the instinctive joy in the life of
things, the free play of muscle, the
complete surrender to the sight or



sound or pleasure of the moment, had been his in full measure ; and he had lived the life of the senses in glad unconsciousness. And the years had gone by and left no mark on him, save the hardening of muscle, the filling out of limb, the waxing strength, the growing exhilaration of youth and freedom and infinite capacity for action and pleasure swiftly coming to clear consciousness.

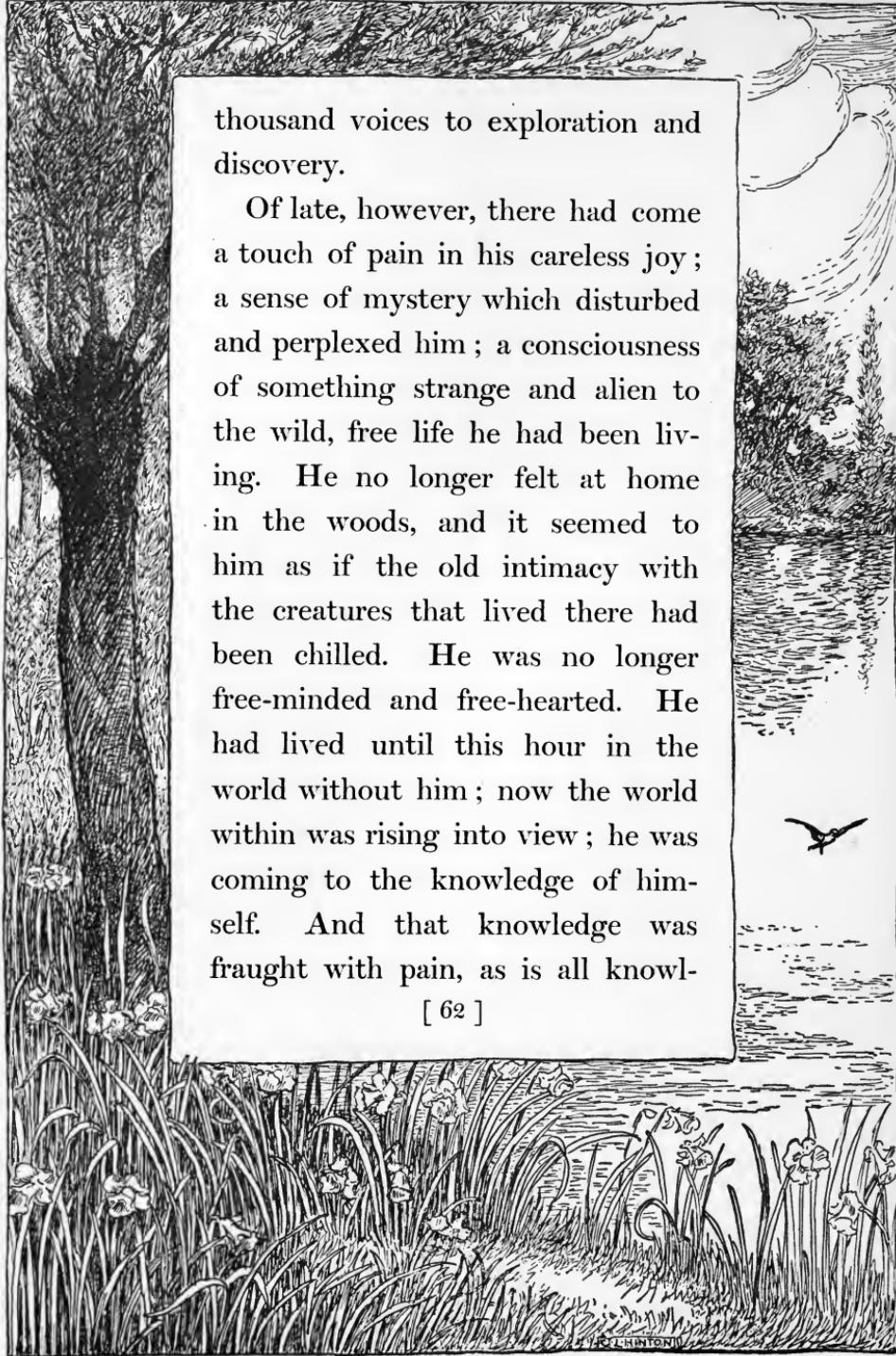


II

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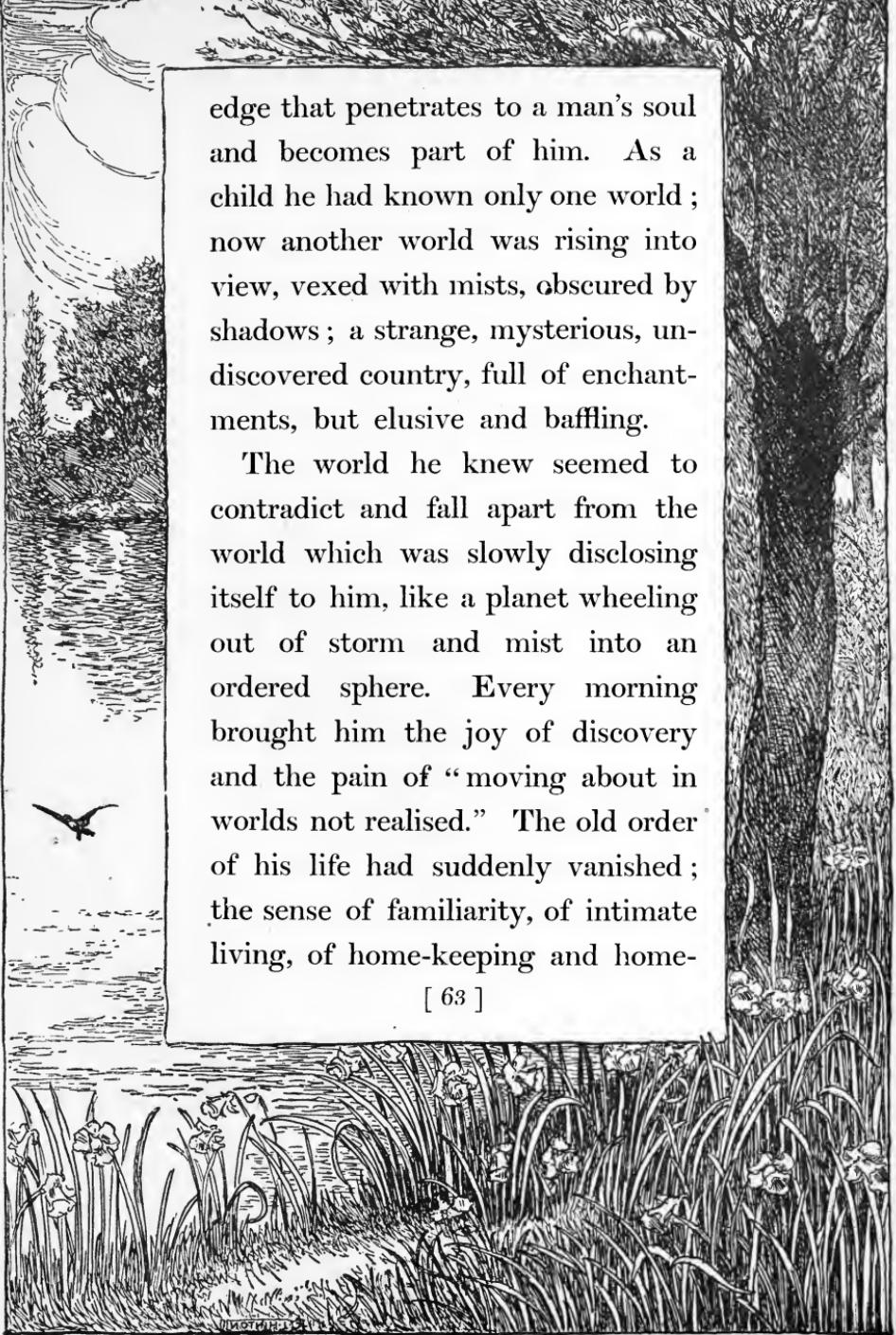
THROUGH the long years of boyhood Nature lay mirrored in his senses without blur or mist, and the images of her manifold wonder and beauty had sunk into the depths of his being. He had lived in the moving world that lay about him, stirred into incessant action by its constant appeal to his energy, caught up and carried forward for days together in a joyful rush of play; led hither and thither in endless quest of little mysteries of sight and sound that teased and baffled him; absorbed into complete self-forgetfulness by the vast continent where his lot was cast, which called him with a

[61]



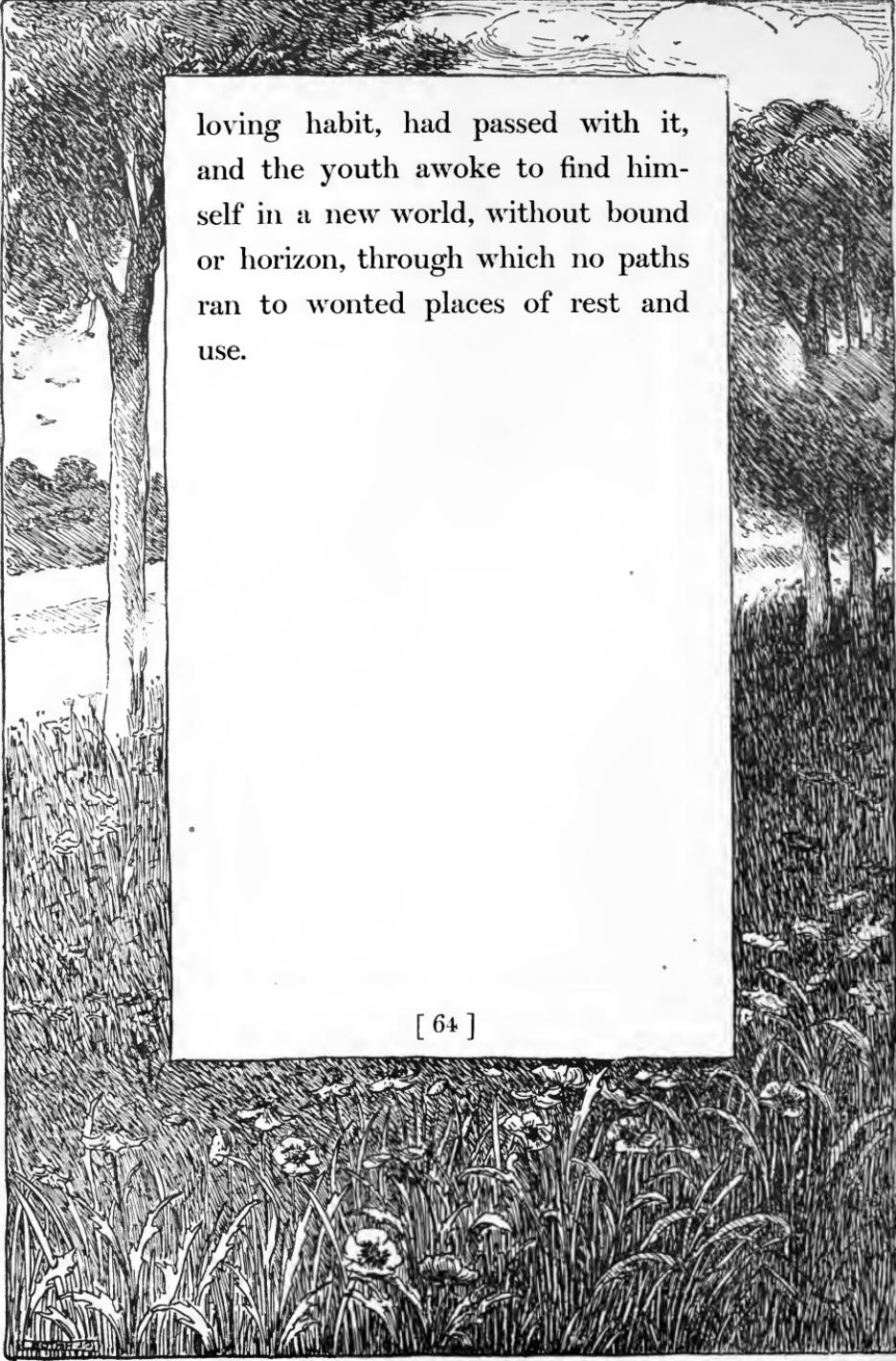
thousand voices to exploration and discovery.

Of late, however, there had come a touch of pain in his careless joy ; a sense of mystery which disturbed and perplexed him ; a consciousness of something strange and alien to the wild, free life he had been living. He no longer felt at home in the woods, and it seemed to him as if the old intimacy with the creatures that lived there had been chilled. He was no longer free-minded and free-hearted. He had lived until this hour in the world without him ; now the world within was rising into view ; he was coming to the knowledge of himself. And that knowledge was fraught with pain, as is all knowl-

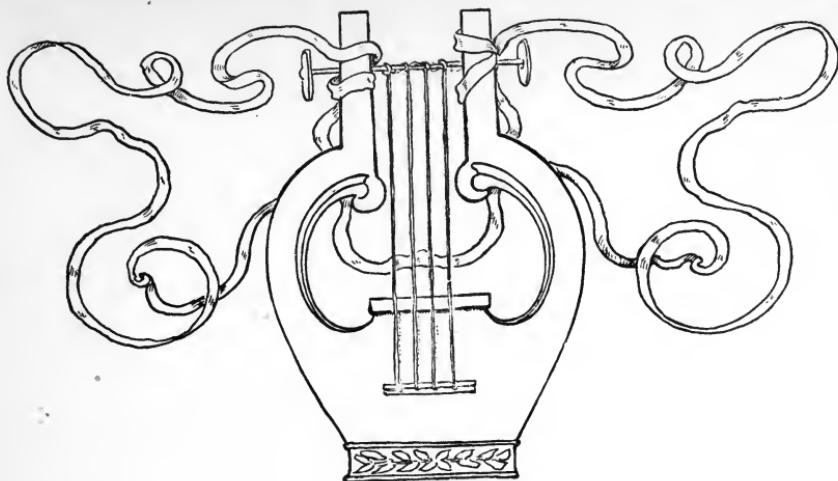


edge that penetrates to a man's soul and becomes part of him. As a child he had known only one world ; now another world was rising into view, vexed with mists, obscured by shadows ; a strange, mysterious, undiscovered country, full of enchantments, but elusive and baffling.

The world he knew seemed to contradict and fall apart from the world which was slowly disclosing itself to him, like a planet wheeling out of storm and mist into an ordered sphere. Every morning brought him the joy of discovery and the pain of "moving about in worlds not realised." The old order of his life had suddenly vanished ; the sense of familiarity, of intimate living, of home-keeping and home-



loving habit, had passed with it, and the youth awoke to find himself in a new world, without bound or horizon, through which no paths ran to wonted places of rest and use.



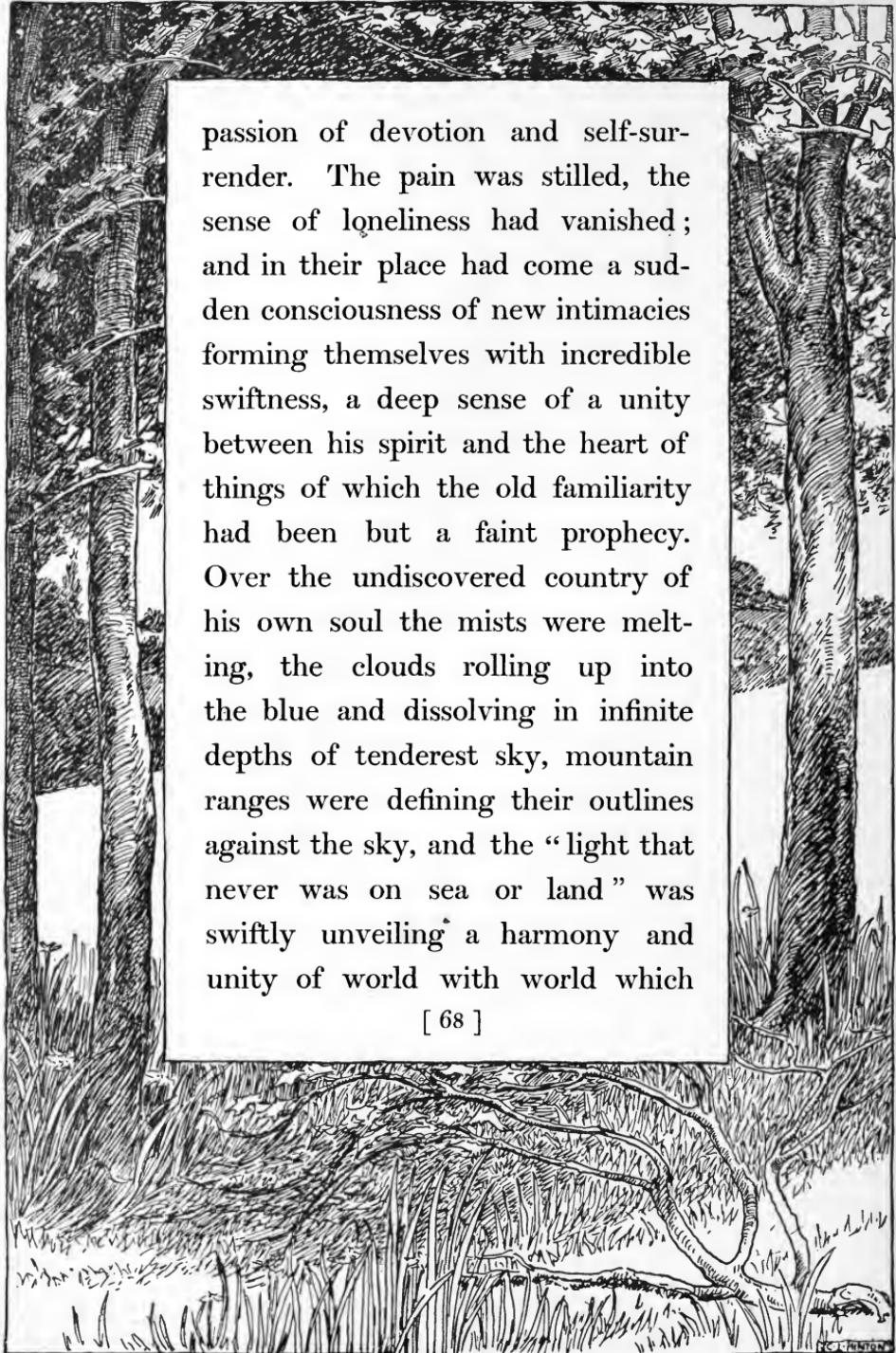
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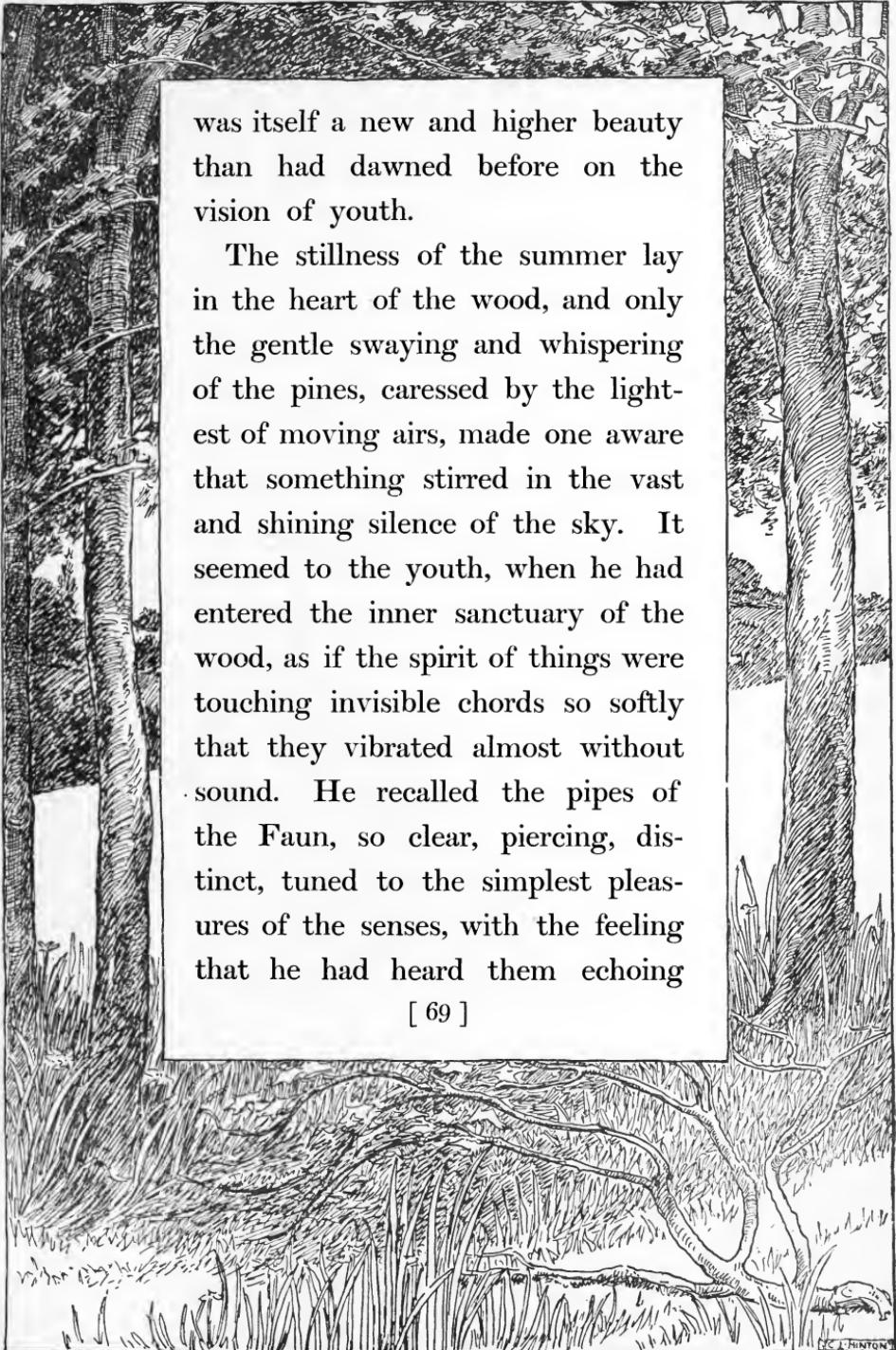
IN such a mood, exhilarated and depressed, full of mounting life, but with the touch of pain on his spirit, the youth had found the murmur of the pines soothing and restful; like a cool hand laid on a hot forehead. Again and again, in these confused and perplexing months, he had fled to their silence and shade as to a retreat in the heart of old and dear things.

As he came across the fields on this radiant morning all the springs of joy were once more rising in him; the young summer touched him through every sense, and his soul rushed out to meet her in a

[67]

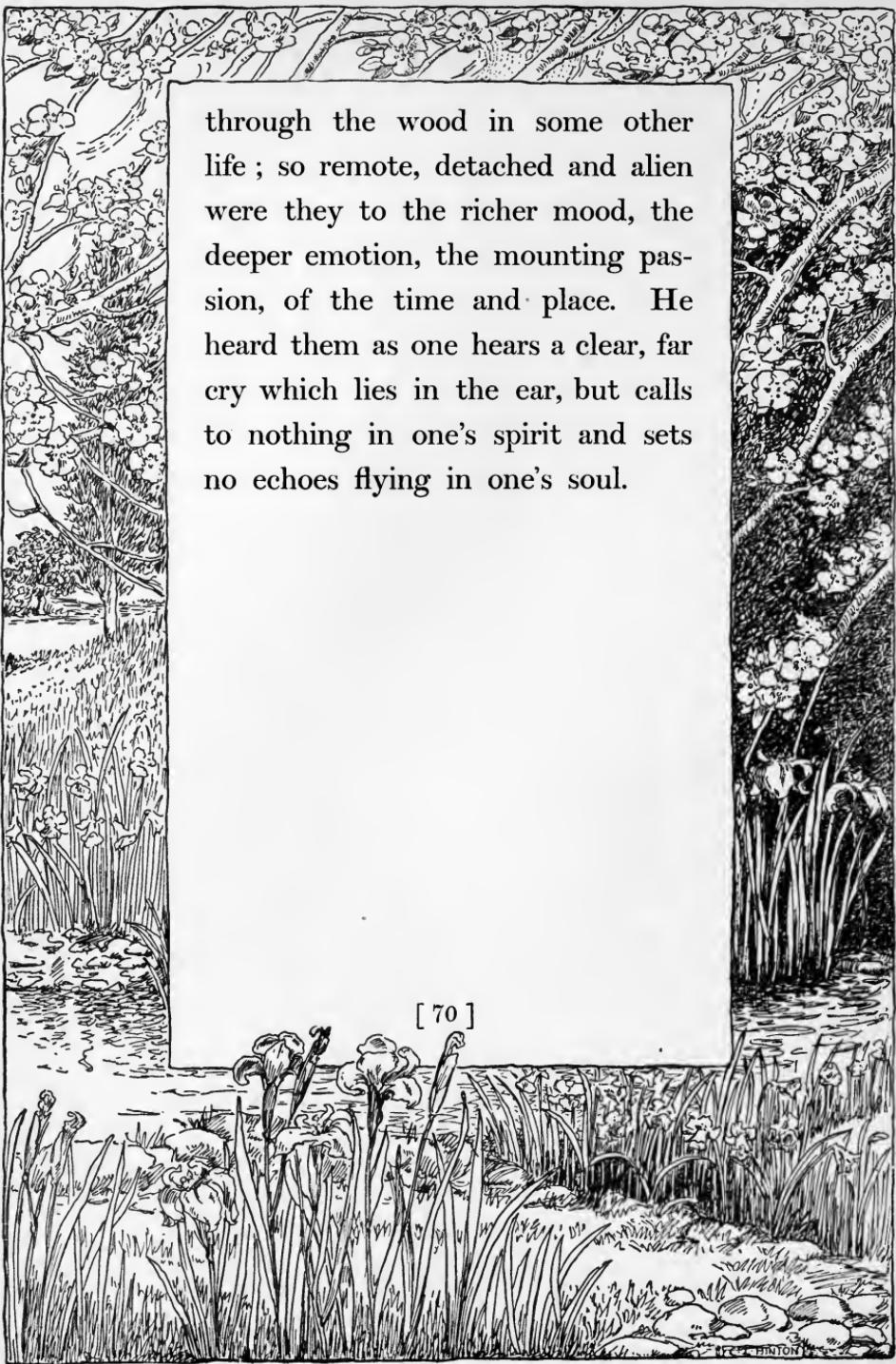


passion of devotion and self-surrender. The pain was stilled, the sense of loneliness had vanished; and in their place had come a sudden consciousness of new intimacies forming themselves with incredible swiftness, a deep sense of a unity between his spirit and the heart of things of which the old familiarity had been but a faint prophecy. Over the undiscovered country of his own soul the mists were melting, the clouds rolling up into the blue and dissolving in infinite depths of tenderest sky, mountain ranges were defining their outlines against the sky, and the "light that never was on sea or land" was swiftly unveiling a harmony and unity of world with world which



was itself a new and higher beauty than had dawned before on the vision of youth.

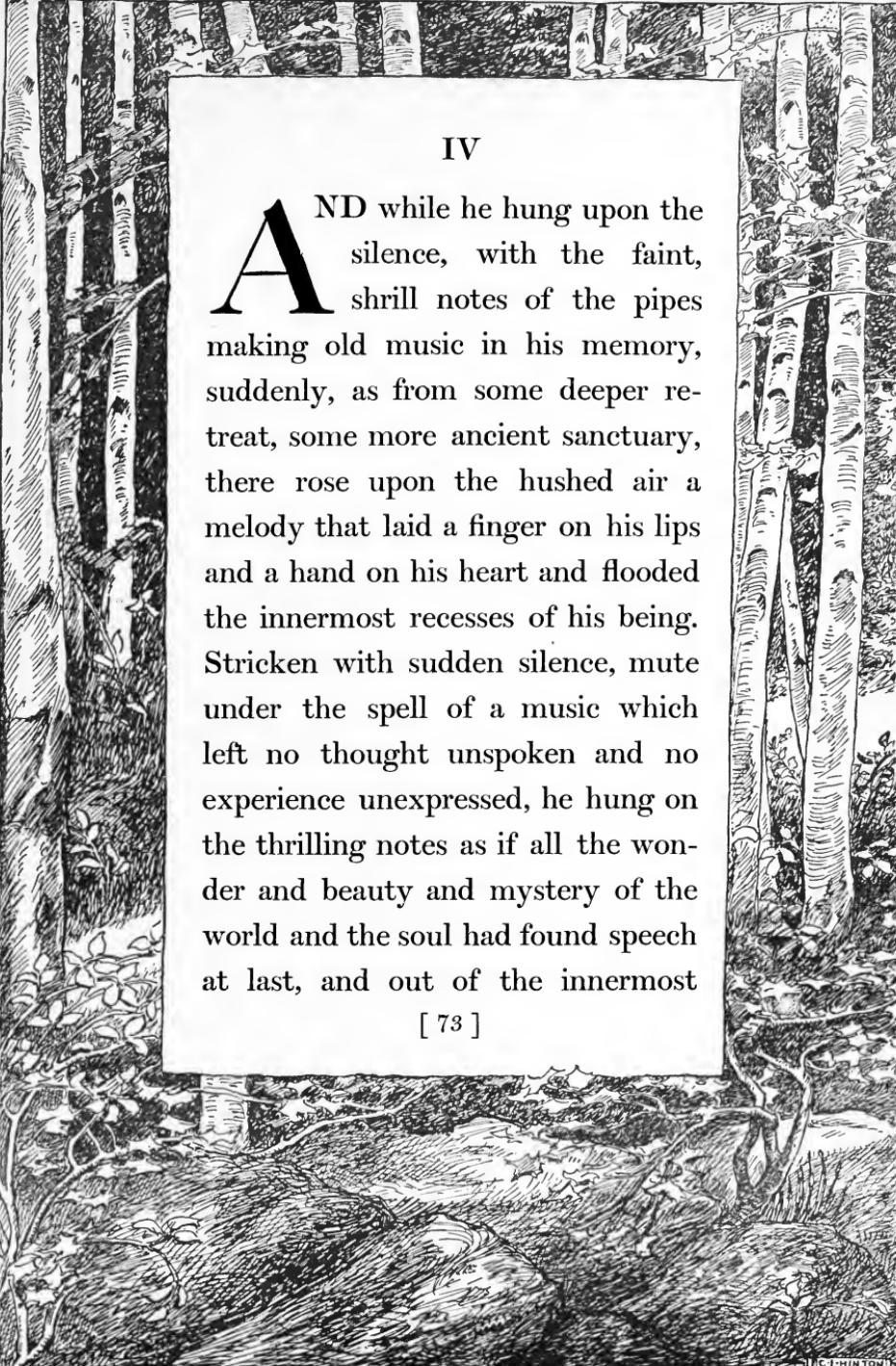
The stillness of the summer lay in the heart of the wood, and only the gentle swaying and whispering of the pines, caressed by the lightest of moving airs, made one aware that something stirred in the vast and shining silence of the sky. It seemed to the youth, when he had entered the inner sanctuary of the wood, as if the spirit of things were touching invisible chords so softly that they vibrated almost without sound. He recalled the pipes of the Faun, so clear, piercing, distinct, tuned to the simplest pleasures of the senses, with the feeling that he had heard them echoing



through the wood in some other life ; so remote, detached and alien were they to the richer mood, the deeper emotion, the mounting passion, of the time and place. He heard them as one hears a clear, far cry which lies in the ear, but calls to nothing in one's spirit and sets no echoes flying in one's soul.



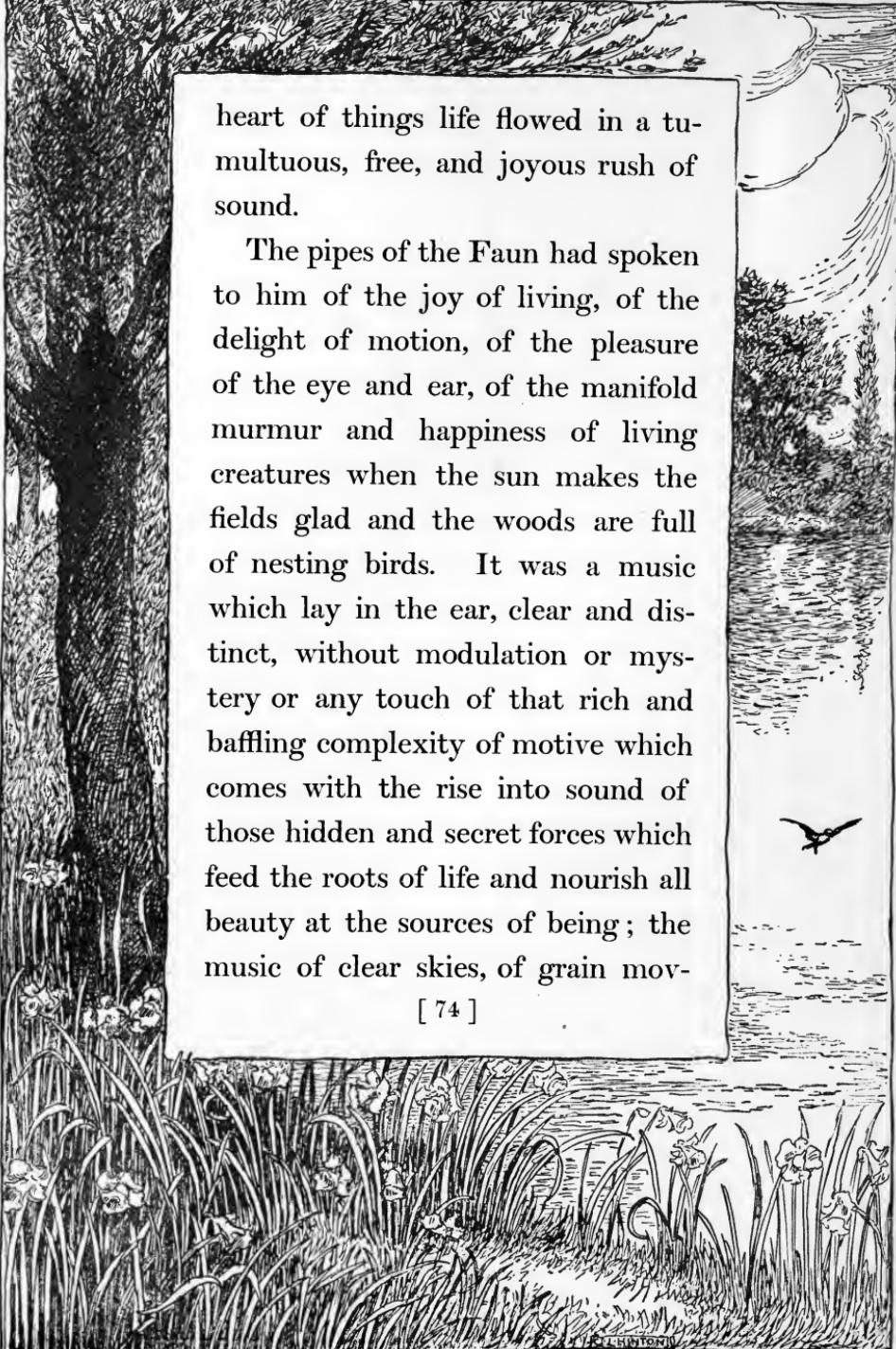
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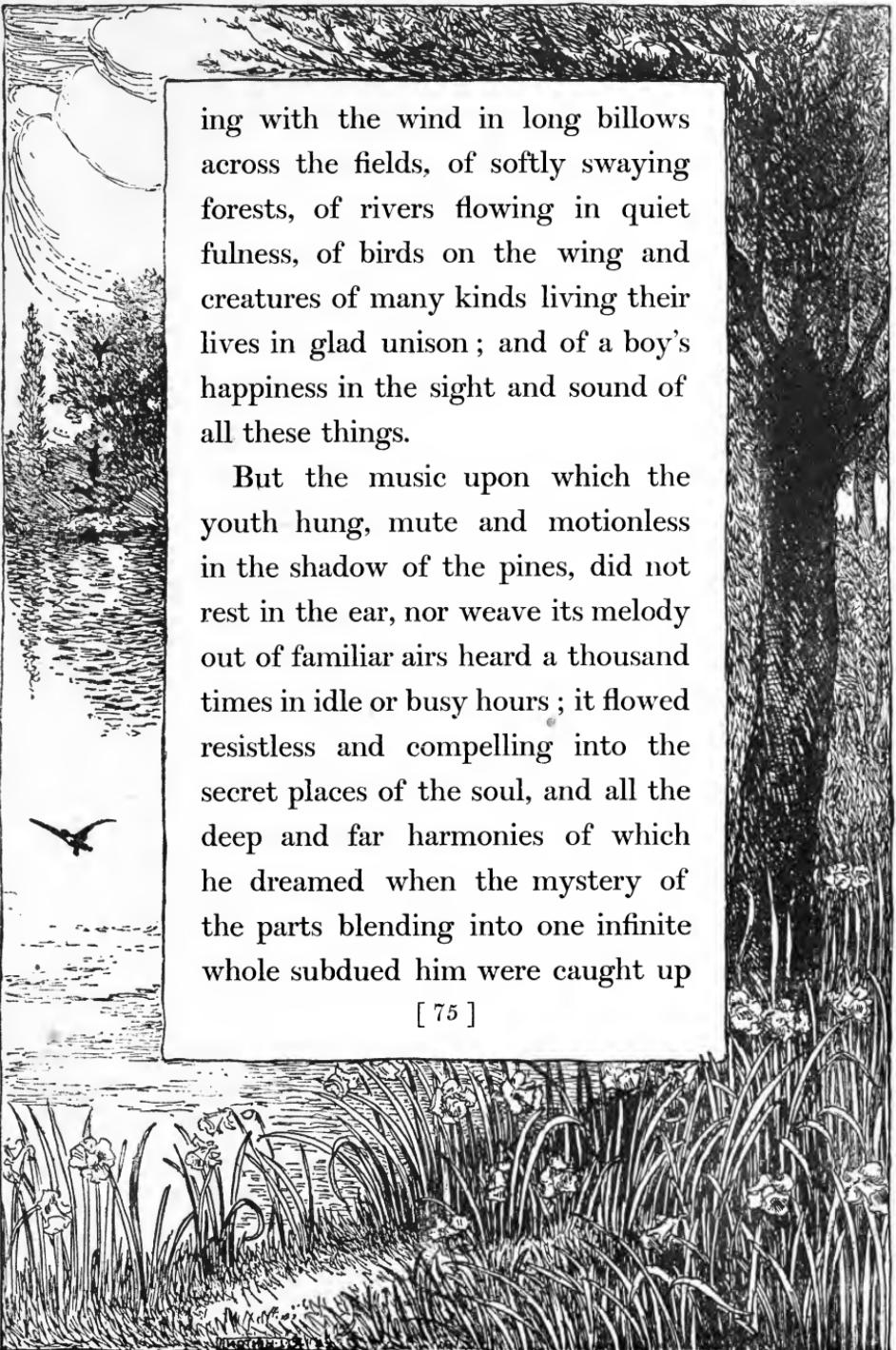
AND while he hung upon the silence, with the faint, shrill notes of the pipes making old music in his memory, suddenly, as from some deeper retreat, some more ancient sanctuary, there rose upon the hushed air a melody that laid a finger on his lips and a hand on his heart and flooded the innermost recesses of his being. Stricken with sudden silence, mute under the spell of a music which left no thought unspoken and no experience unexpressed, he hung on the thrilling notes as if all the wonder and beauty and mystery of the world and the soul had found speech at last, and out of the innermost

[73]



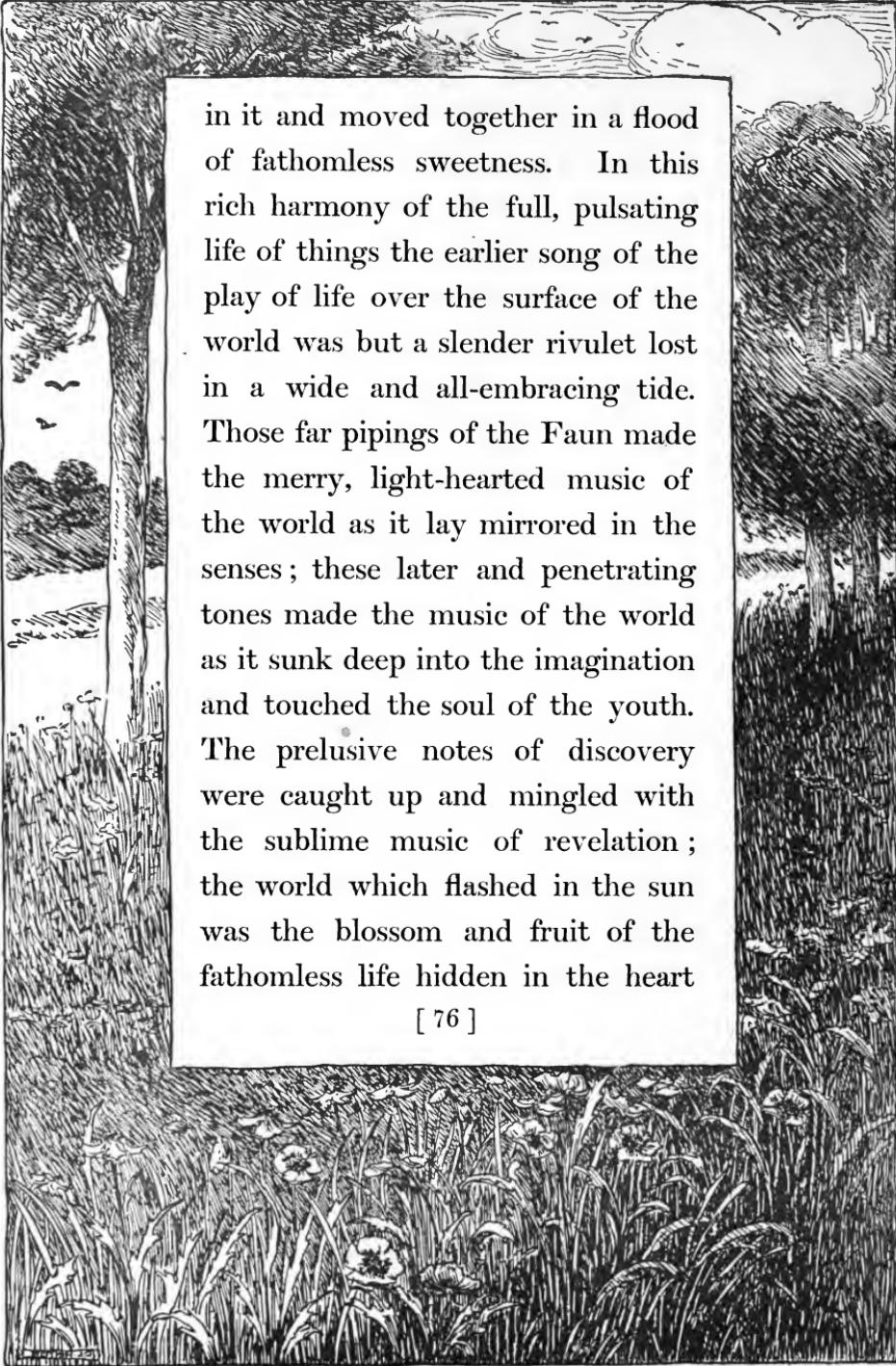
heart of things life flowed in a tumultuous, free, and joyous rush of sound.

The pipes of the Faun had spoken to him of the joy of living, of the delight of motion, of the pleasure of the eye and ear, of the manifold murmur and happiness of living creatures when the sun makes the fields glad and the woods are full of nesting birds. It was a music which lay in the ear, clear and distinct, without modulation or mystery or any touch of that rich and baffling complexity of motive which comes with the rise into sound of those hidden and secret forces which feed the roots of life and nourish all beauty at the sources of being; the music of clear skies, of grain mov-

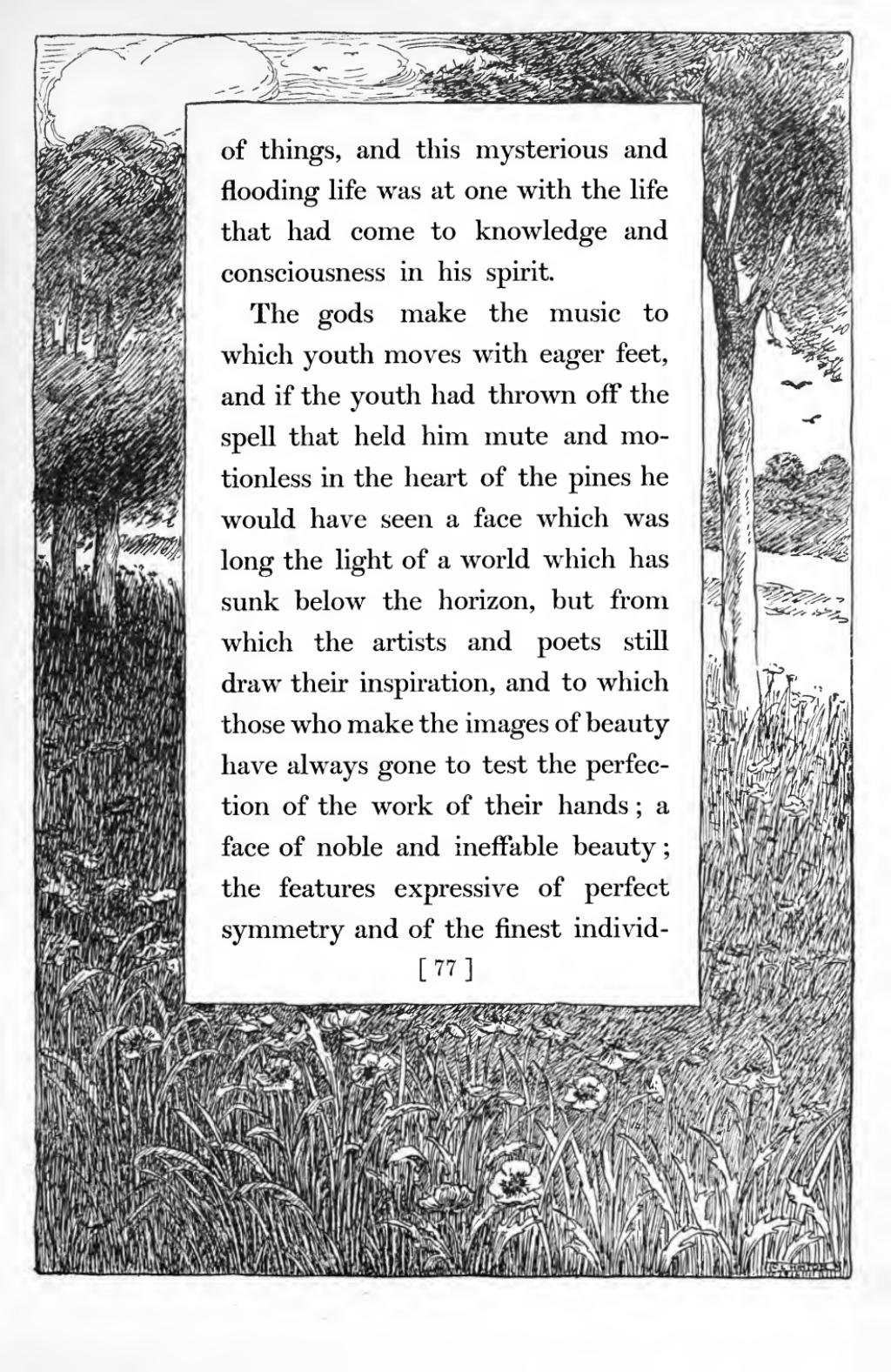


ing with the wind in long billows across the fields, of softly swaying forests, of rivers flowing in quiet fulness, of birds on the wing and creatures of many kinds living their lives in glad unison ; and of a boy's happiness in the sight and sound of all these things.

But the music upon which the youth hung, mute and motionless in the shadow of the pines, did not rest in the ear, nor weave its melody out of familiar airs heard a thousand times in idle or busy hours ; it flowed resistless and compelling into the secret places of the soul, and all the deep and far harmonies of which he dreamed when the mystery of the parts blending into one infinite whole subdued him were caught up



in it and moved together in a flood of fathomless sweetness. In this rich harmony of the full, pulsating life of things the earlier song of the play of life over the surface of the world was but a slender rivulet lost in a wide and all-embracing tide. Those far pipings of the Faun made the merry, light-hearted music of the world as it lay mirrored in the senses ; these later and penetrating tones made the music of the world as it sunk deep into the imagination and touched the soul of the youth. The prelusive notes of discovery were caught up and mingled with the sublime music of revelation ; the world which flashed in the sun was the blossom and fruit of the fathomless life hidden in the heart



of things, and this mysterious and flooding life was at one with the life that had come to knowledge and consciousness in his spirit.

The gods make the music to which youth moves with eager feet, and if the youth had thrown off the spell that held him mute and motionless in the heart of the pines he would have seen a face which was long the light of a world which has sunk below the horizon, but from which the artists and poets still draw their inspiration, and to which those who make the images of beauty have always gone to test the perfection of the work of their hands ; a face of noble and ineffable beauty ; the features expressive of perfect symmetry and of the finest individ-

uality ; the eyes unshadowed by pain, luminous, tender, glowing ; the great shape so divinely fashioned that strength was lost in beauty and beauty became the highest form of strength.

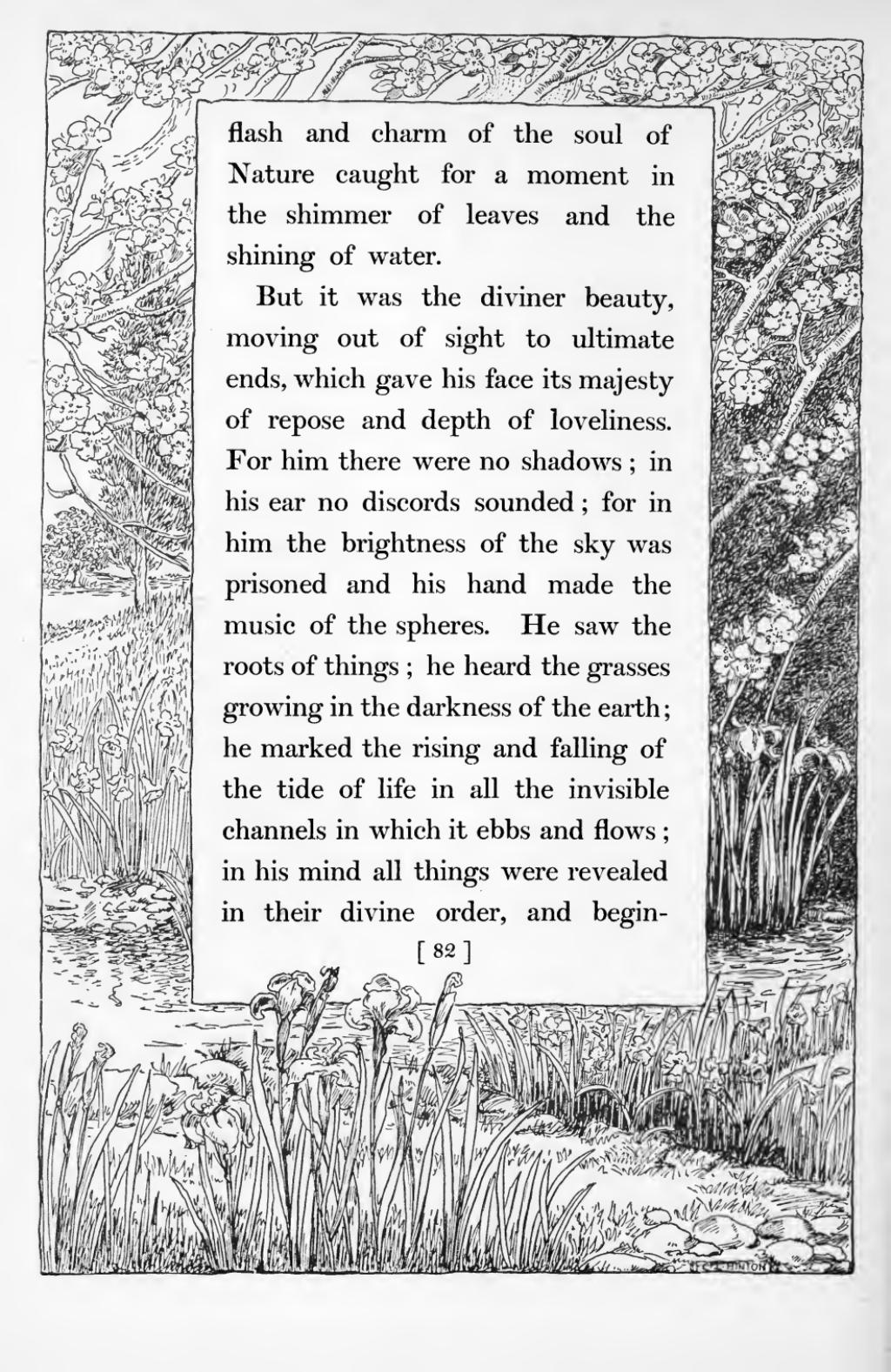


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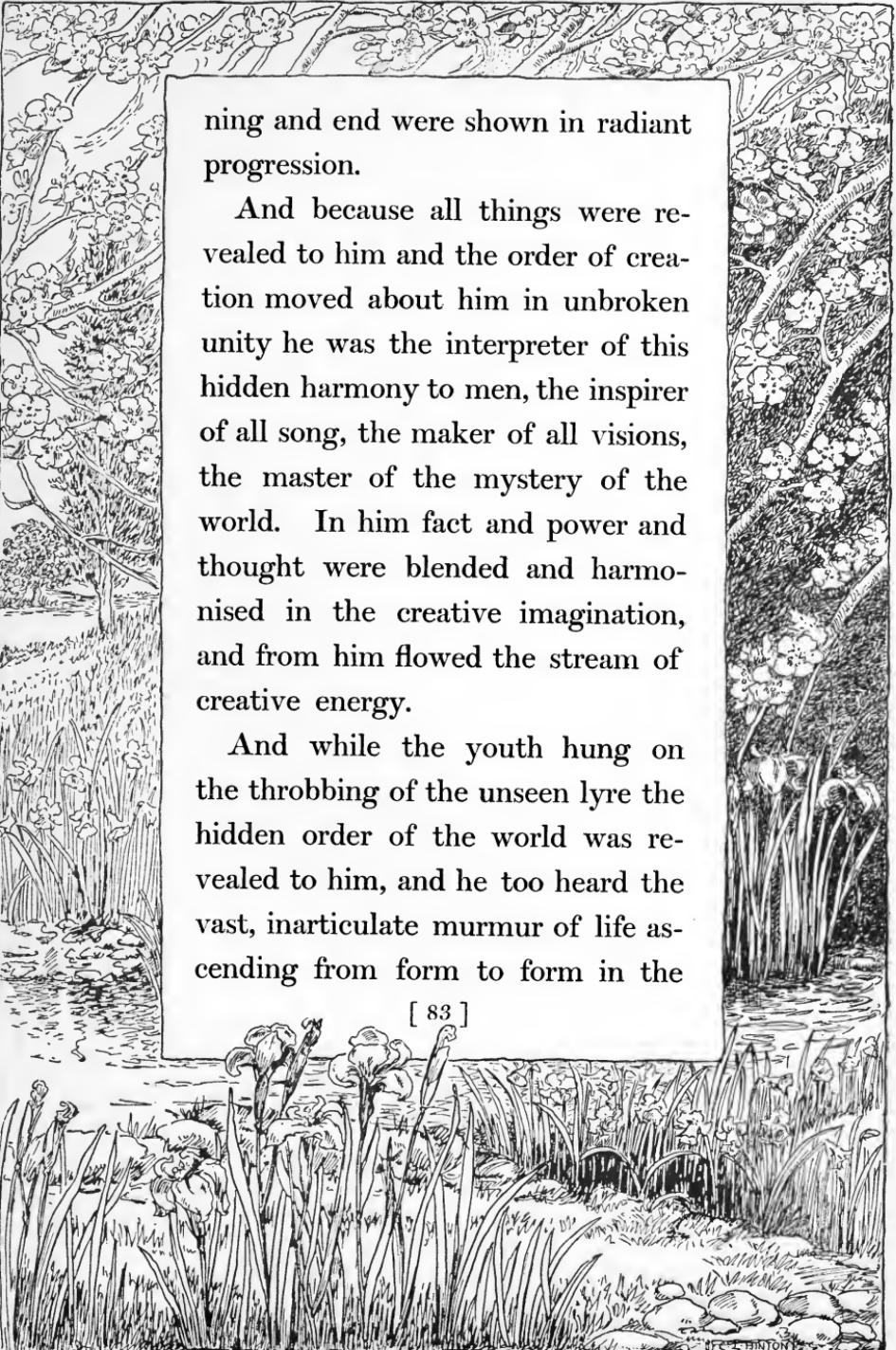
V

LONG way the god had come and manifold had been his wanderings; but wherever he went the music of high heaven went with him. When he watched the herds in shepherd's guise, the sound of the strings touched by his hand had not only led the flocks, docile and happy, but so filled them with life that they had grown as flocks had never grown before. Healer and protector, bringer of light and health, the splendour of his face was the poetry of the world, the glance of his eye its prophecy, the trembling of the strings at his touch its music. He was the master of all living things and of the



flash and charm of the soul of Nature caught for a moment in the shimmer of leaves and the shining of water.

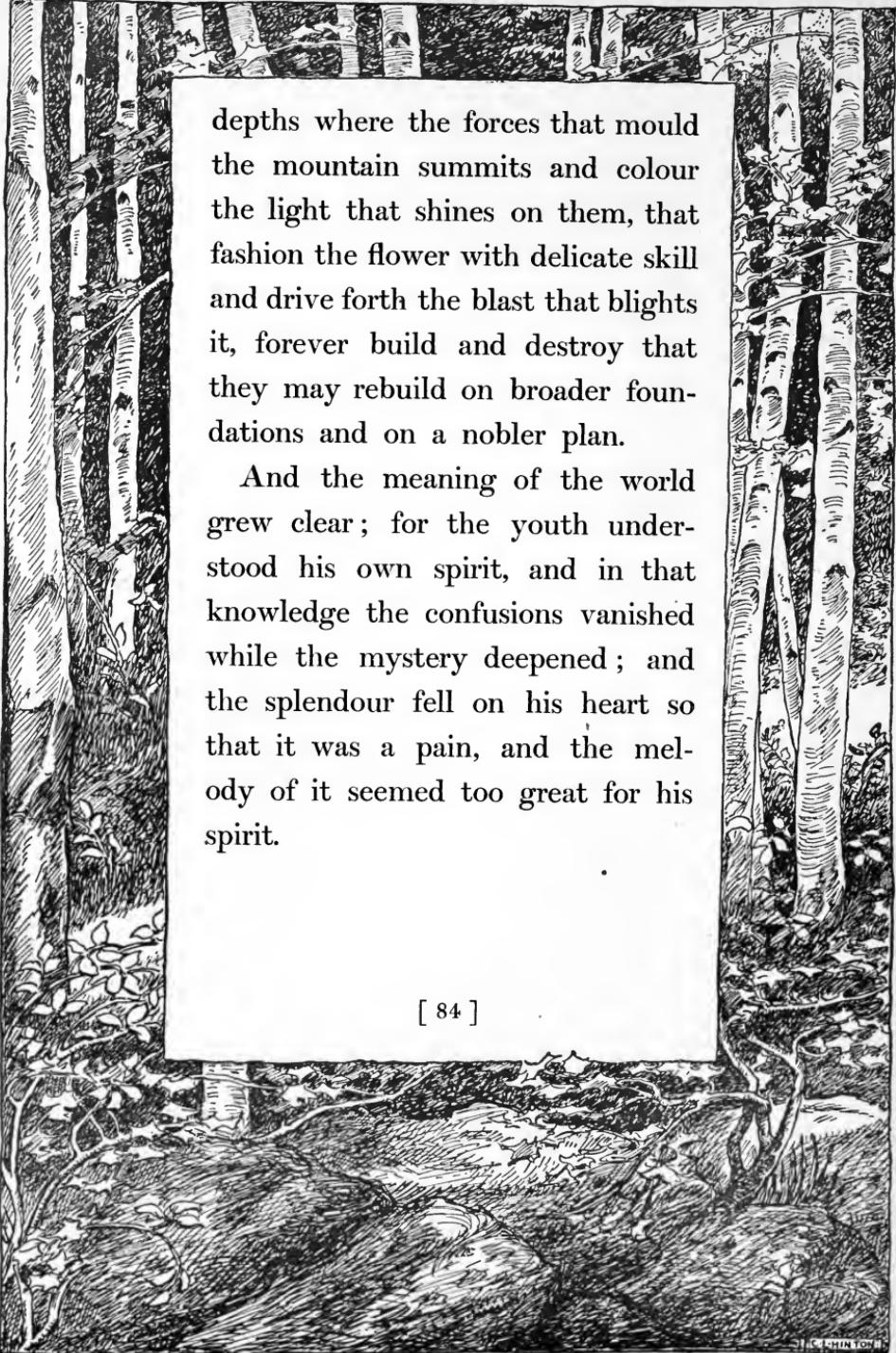
But it was the diviner beauty, moving out of sight to ultimate ends, which gave his face its majesty of repose and depth of loveliness. For him there were no shadows ; in his ear no discords sounded ; for in him the brightness of the sky was imprisoned and his hand made the music of the spheres. He saw the roots of things ; he heard the grasses growing in the darkness of the earth ; he marked the rising and falling of the tide of life in all the invisible channels in which it ebbs and flows ; in his mind all things were revealed in their divine order, and begin-



ning and end were shown in radiant progression.

And because all things were revealed to him and the order of creation moved about him in unbroken unity he was the interpreter of this hidden harmony to men, the inspirer of all song, the maker of all visions, the master of the mystery of the world. In him fact and power and thought were blended and harmonised in the creative imagination, and from him flowed the stream of creative energy.

And while the youth hung on the throbbing of the unseen lyre the hidden order of the world was revealed to him, and he too heard the vast, inarticulate murmur of life ascending from form to form in the



depths where the forces that mould the mountain summits and colour the light that shines on them, that fashion the flower with delicate skill and drive forth the blast that blights it, forever build and destroy that they may rebuild on broader foundations and on a nobler plan.

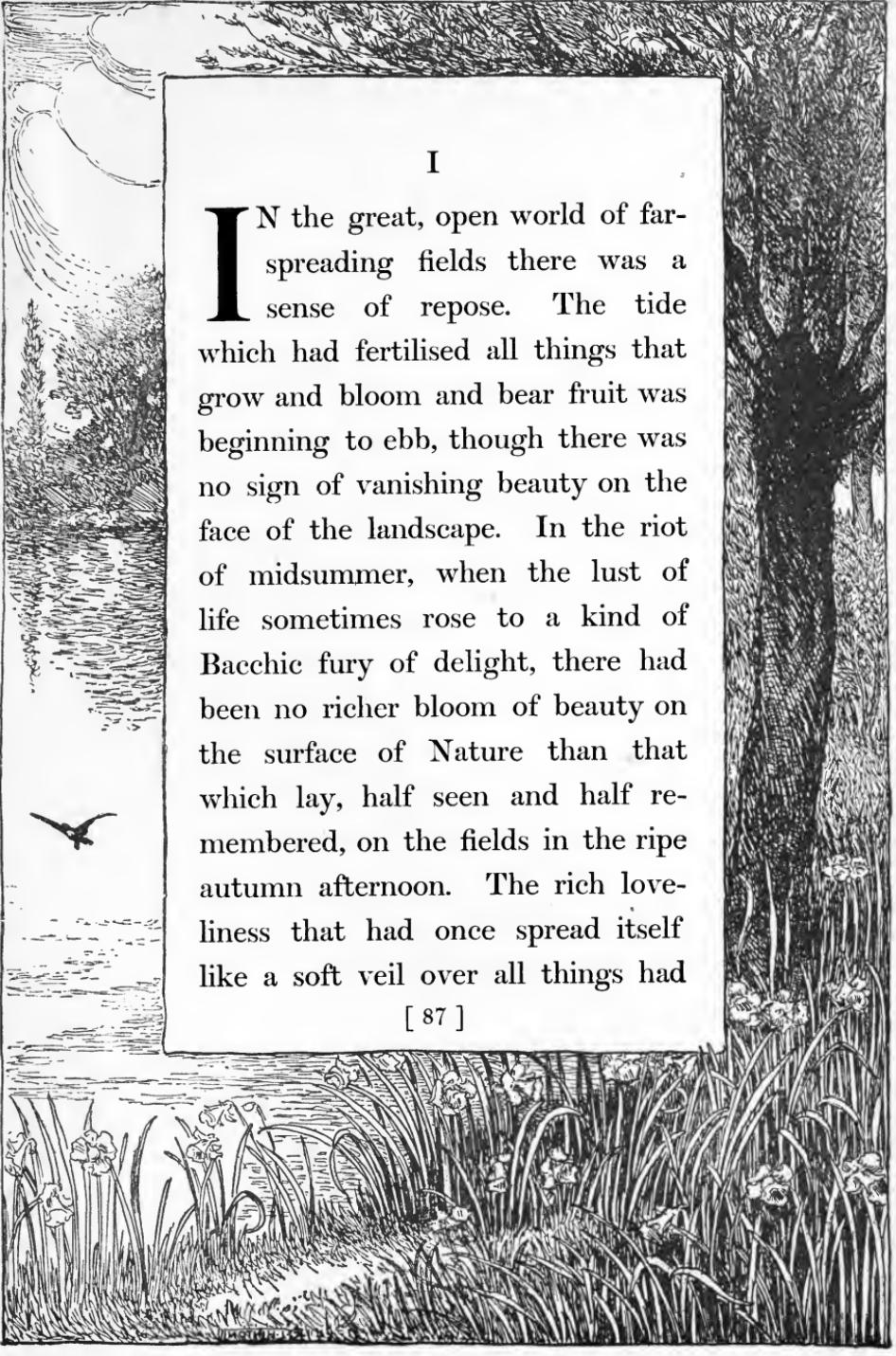
And the meaning of the world grew clear; for the youth understood his own spirit, and in that knowledge the confusions vanished while the mystery deepened; and the splendour fell on his heart so that it was a pain, and the melody of it seemed too great for his spirit.



THE SICKLE OF DEMETER

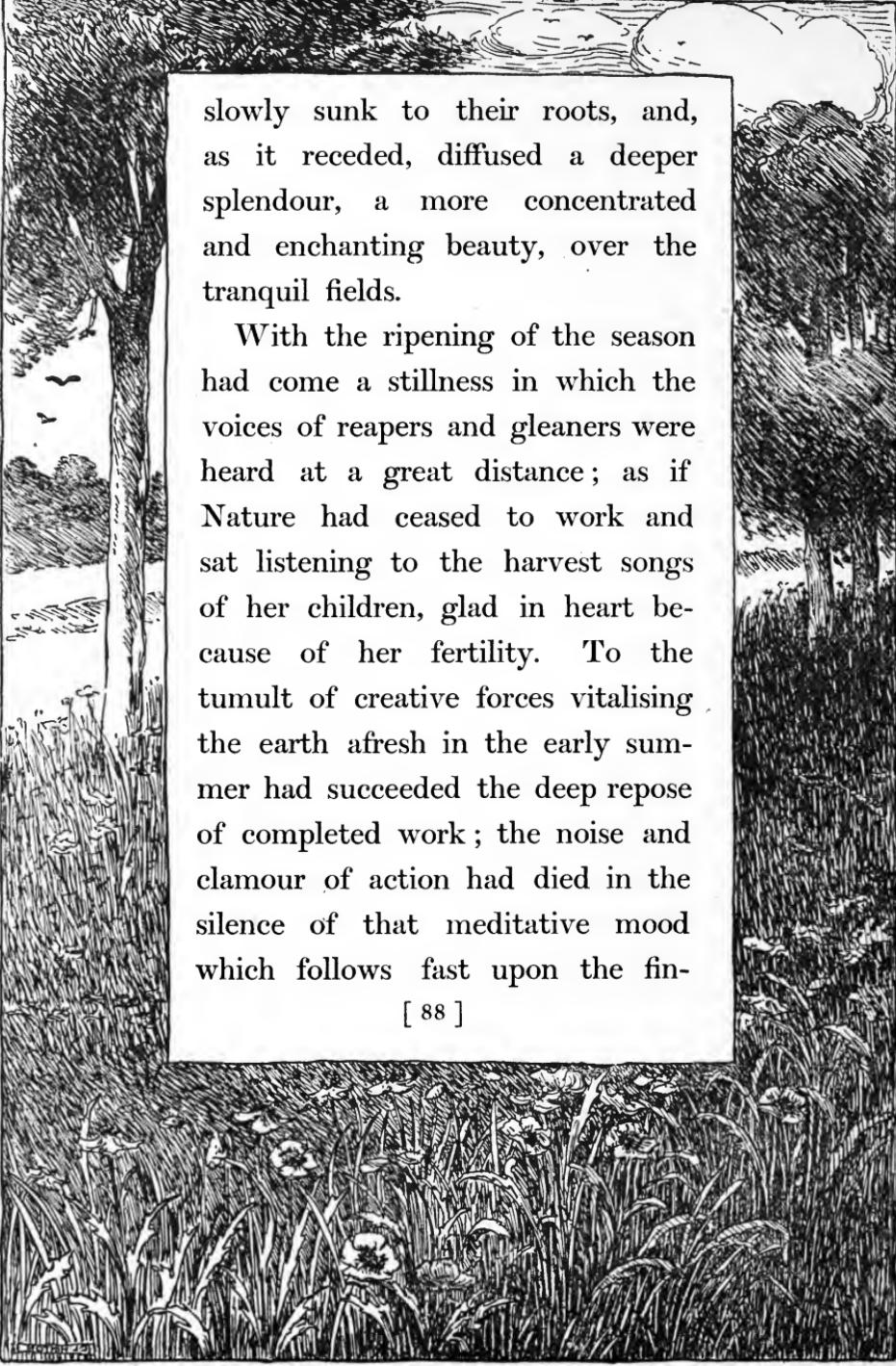
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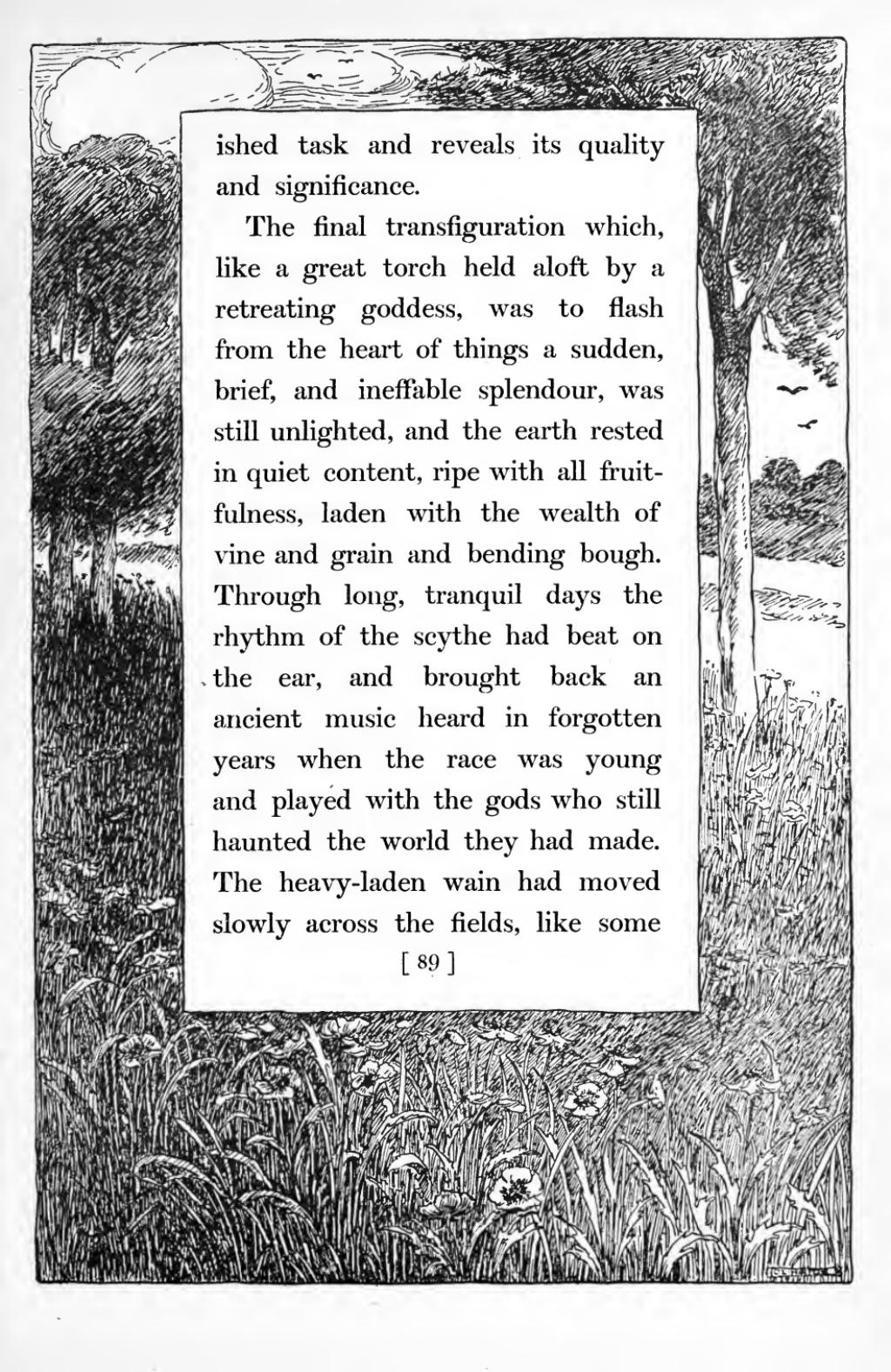
I

IN the great, open world of far-spreading fields there was a sense of repose. The tide which had fertilised all things that grow and bloom and bear fruit was beginning to ebb, though there was no sign of vanishing beauty on the face of the landscape. In the riot of midsummer, when the lust of life sometimes rose to a kind of Bacchic fury of delight, there had been no richer bloom of beauty on the surface of Nature than that which lay, half seen and half remembered, on the fields in the ripe autumn afternoon. The rich loveliness that had once spread itself like a soft veil over all things had



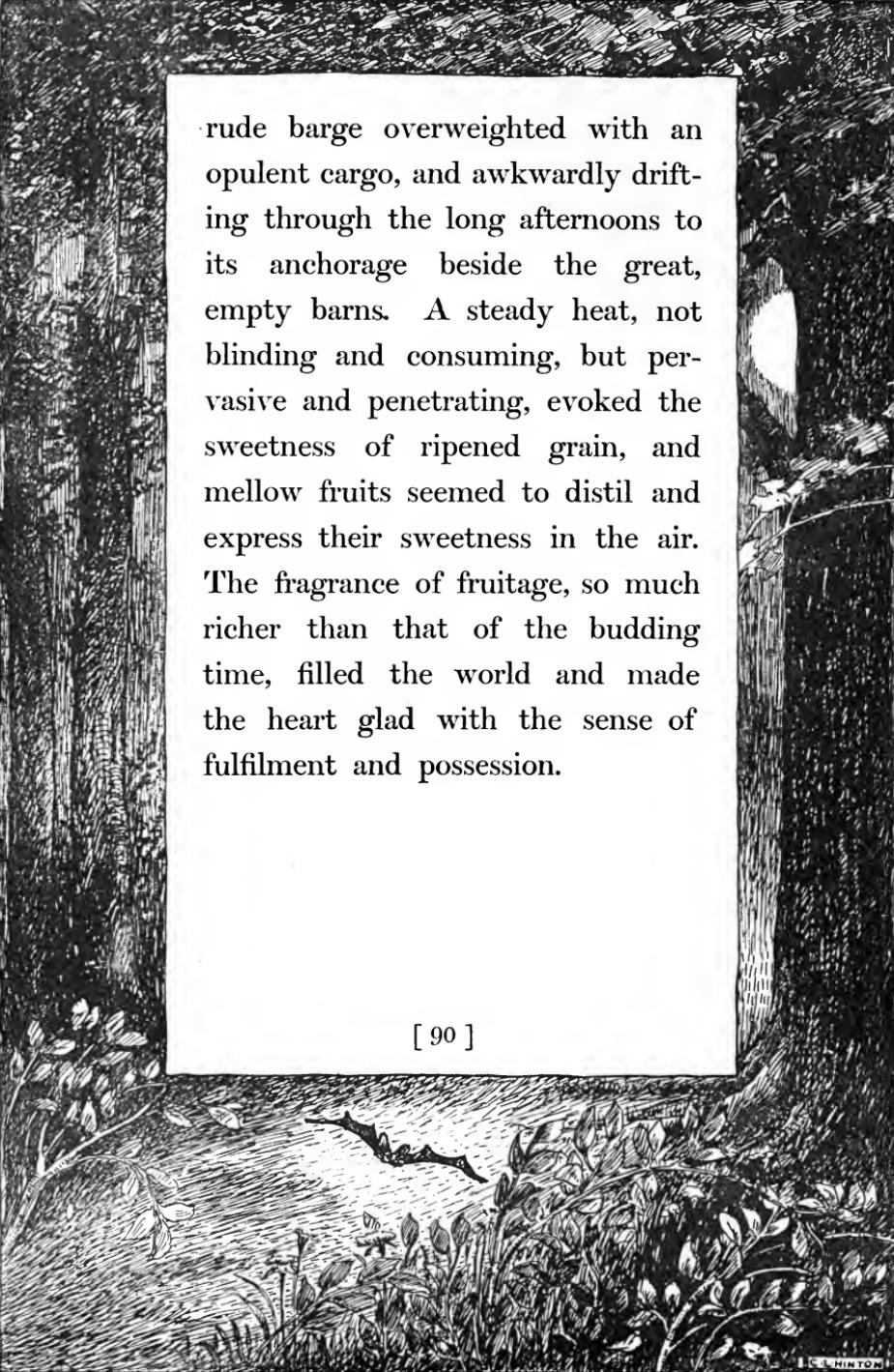
slowly sunk to their roots, and, as it receded, diffused a deeper splendour, a more concentrated and enchanting beauty, over the tranquil fields.

With the ripening of the season had come a stillness in which the voices of reapers and gleaners were heard at a great distance; as if Nature had ceased to work and sat listening to the harvest songs of her children, glad in heart because of her fertility. To the tumult of creative forces vitalising the earth afresh in the early summer had succeeded the deep repose of completed work; the noise and clamour of action had died in the silence of that meditative mood which follows fast upon the fin-



ished task and reveals its quality and significance.

The final transfiguration which, like a great torch held aloft by a retreating goddess, was to flash from the heart of things a sudden, brief, and ineffable splendour, was still unlighted, and the earth rested in quiet content, ripe with all fruitfulness, laden with the wealth of vine and grain and bending bough. Through long, tranquil days the rhythm of the scythe had beat on the ear, and brought back an ancient music heard in forgotten years when the race was young and played with the gods who still haunted the world they had made. The heavy-laden wain had moved slowly across the fields, like some



rude barge overweighted with an opulent cargo, and awkwardly drifting through the long afternoons to its anchorage beside the great, empty barns. A steady heat, not blinding and consuming, but pervasive and penetrating, evoked the sweetness of ripened grain, and mellow fruits seemed to distil and express their sweetness in the air. The fragrance of fruitage, so much richer than that of the budding time, filled the world and made the heart glad with the sense of fulfilment and possession.

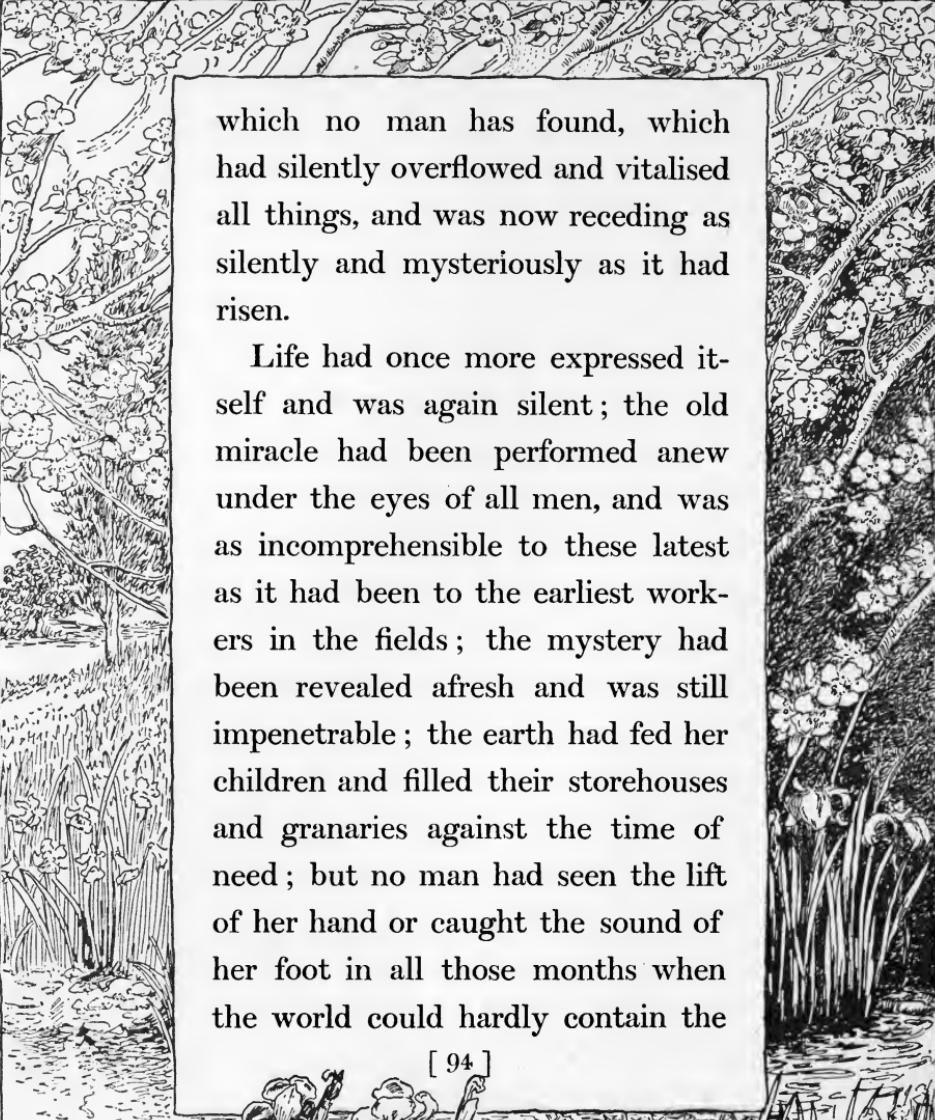


II



II

TO the man who came slowly across the fields the whole world smelled of the ripened summer; of all the rich juices which had mounted out of the soul in a million million spears and stalks and blades and stems; of all the potencies of form and colour and odour, hidden in the darkness, that had escaped to take shape in innumerable grasses, flowers, and shrubs with a skill surpassing the thought of man, and had breathed into them a sweetness deep as the fathomless purity of Nature; of the mysterious fountain of life at the heart of things, which so many men have sought but



which no man has found, which had silently overflowed and vitalised all things, and was now receding as silently and mysteriously as it had risen.

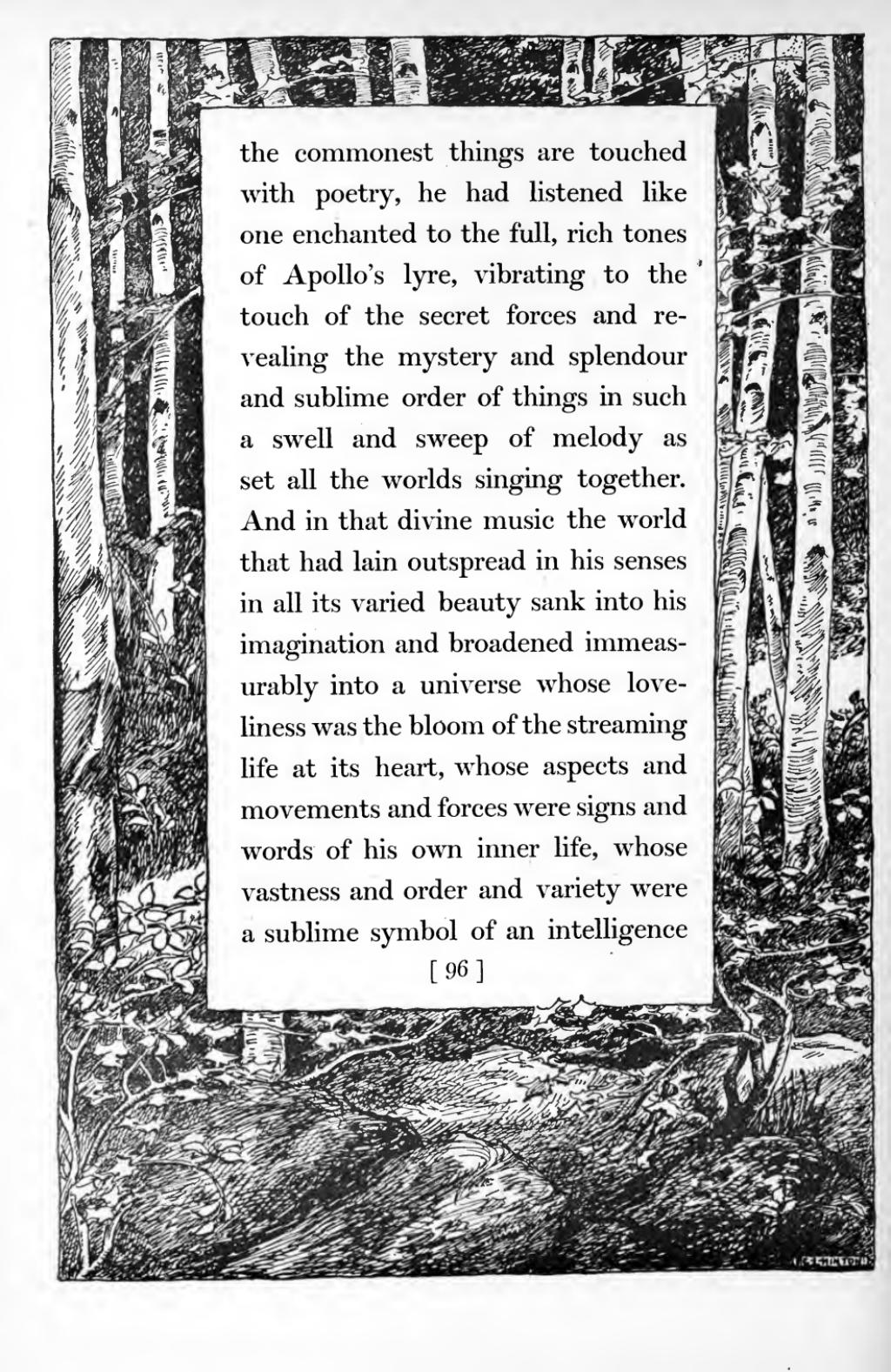
Life had once more expressed itself and was again silent; the old miracle had been performed anew under the eyes of all men, and was as incomprehensible to these latest as it had been to the earliest workers in the fields; the mystery had been revealed afresh and was still impenetrable; the earth had fed her children and filled their storehouses and granaries against the time of need; but no man had seen the lift of her hand or caught the sound of her foot in all those months when the world could hardly contain the



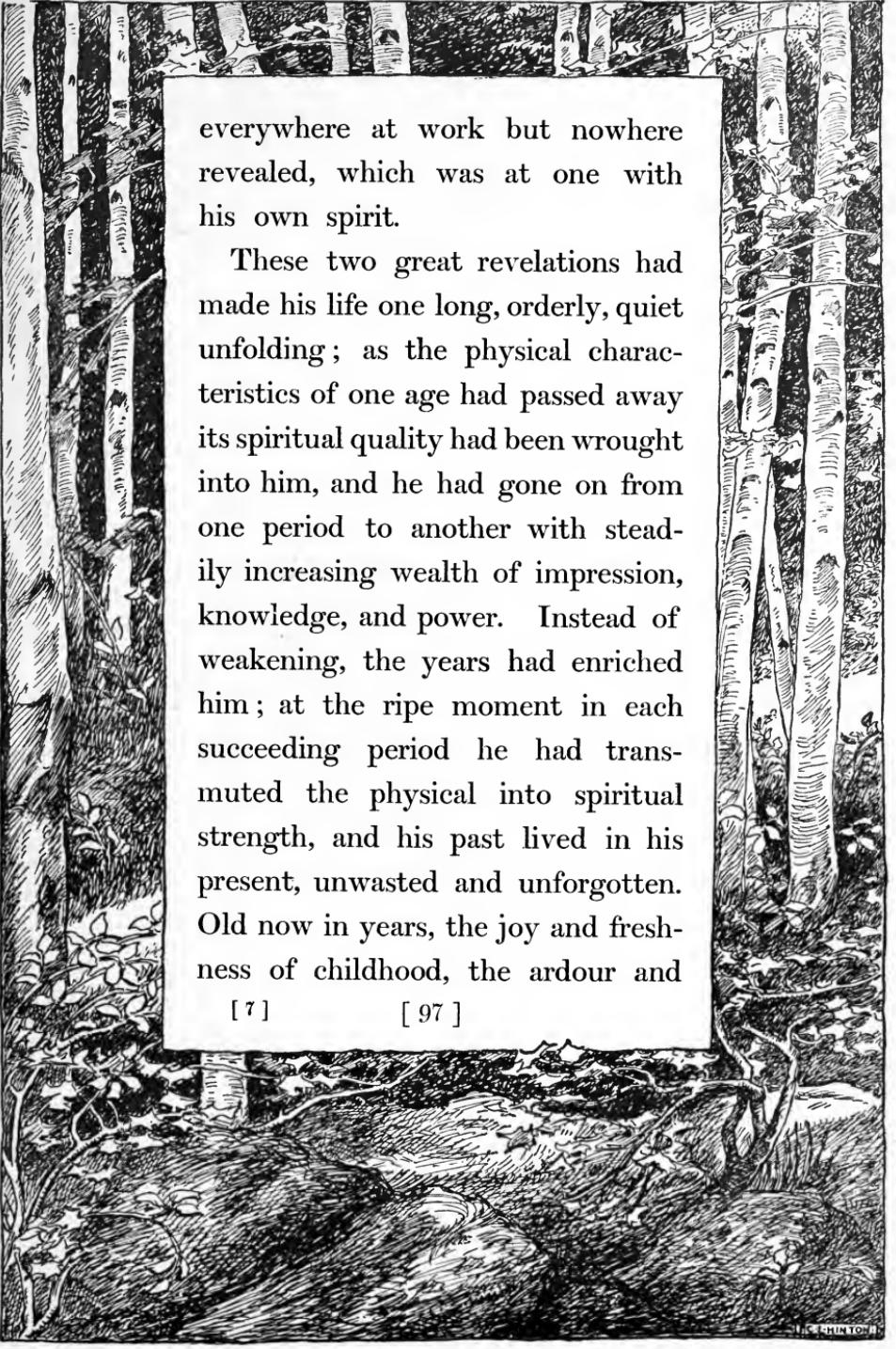
manifold and tremendous energies
she kept at work.

Time, the ripener, had made friends with the man who meditated in the well-gleaned fields and had enriched him year by year. Far back in boyhood he had heard the pipes of the Faun and followed them, glad and free, into the depths of the wood and lived at ease with the creatures that hide there; the birds paid no more attention to him than to other familiar and friendly things; he had early won the freedom of the fields and been as one of the wild things that have no other roof but the sky, and are fed by the providence of Nature.

And then, in his golden youth, when the imagination kindles and

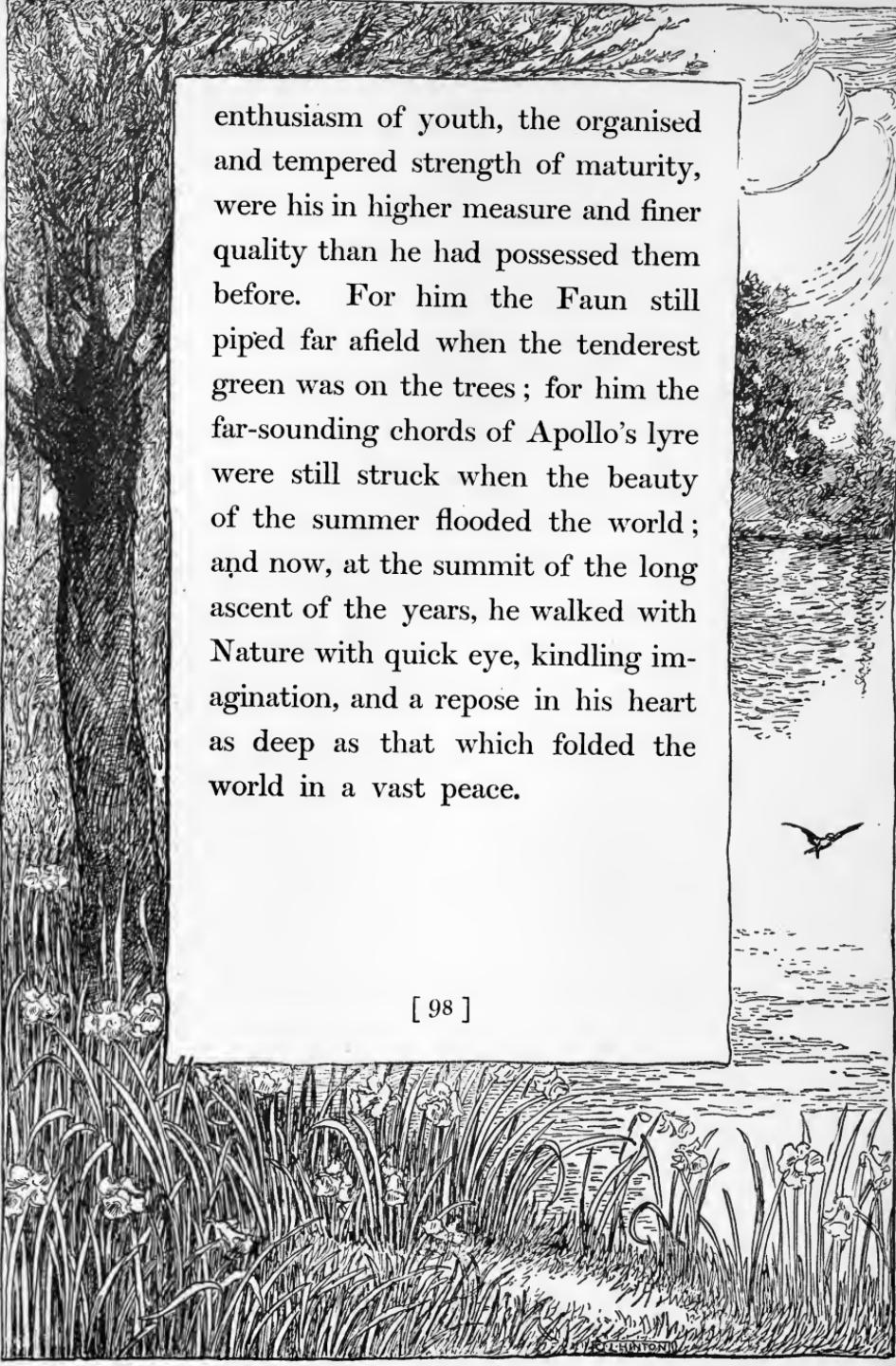


the commonest things are touched with poetry, he had listened like one enchanted to the full, rich tones of Apollo's lyre, vibrating to the touch of the secret forces and revealing the mystery and splendour and sublime order of things in such a swell and sweep of melody as set all the worlds singing together. And in that divine music the world that had lain outspread in his senses in all its varied beauty sank into his imagination and broadened immeasurably into a universe whose loveliness was the bloom of the streaming life at its heart, whose aspects and movements and forces were signs and words of his own inner life, whose vastness and order and variety were a sublime symbol of an intelligence

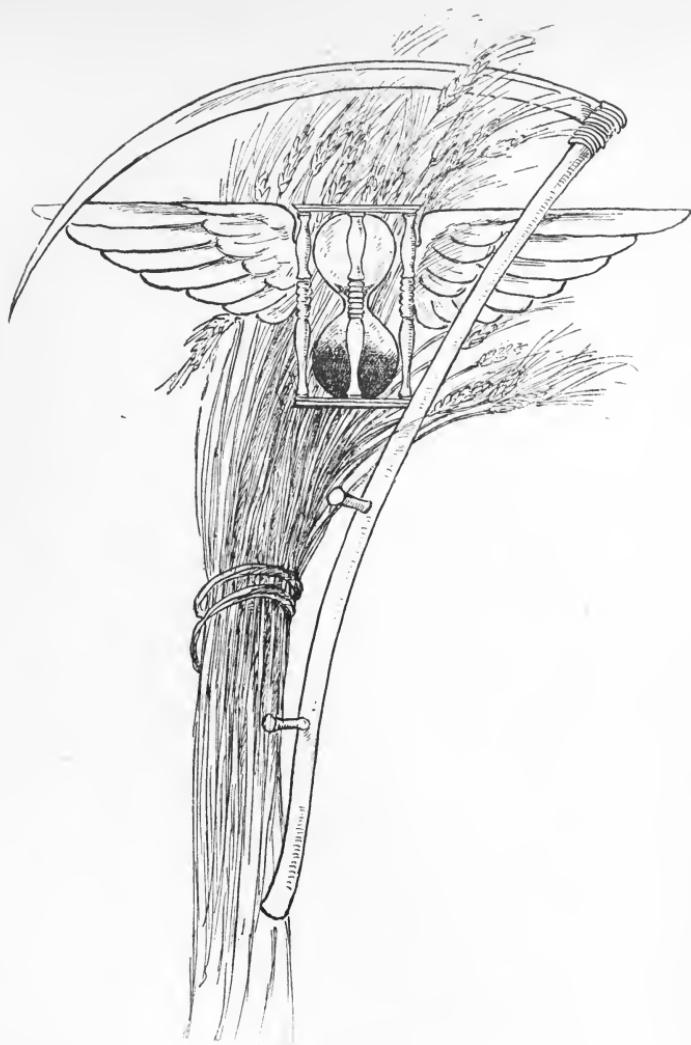


everywhere at work but nowhere revealed, which was at one with his own spirit.

These two great revelations had made his life one long, orderly, quiet unfolding ; as the physical characteristics of one age had passed away its spiritual quality had been wrought into him, and he had gone on from one period to another with steadily increasing wealth of impression, knowledge, and power. Instead of weakening, the years had enriched him ; at the ripe moment in each succeeding period he had transmuted the physical into spiritual strength, and his past lived in his present, unwasted and unforgotten. Old now in years, the joy and freshness of childhood, the ardour and



enthusiasm of youth, the organised and tempered strength of maturity, were his in higher measure and finer quality than he had possessed them before. For him the Faun still piped far afield when the tenderest green was on the trees ; for him the far-sounding chords of Apollo's lyre were still struck when the beauty of the summer flooded the world ; and now, at the summit of the long ascent of the years, he walked with Nature with quick eye, kindling imagination, and a repose in his heart as deep as that which folded the world in a vast peace.



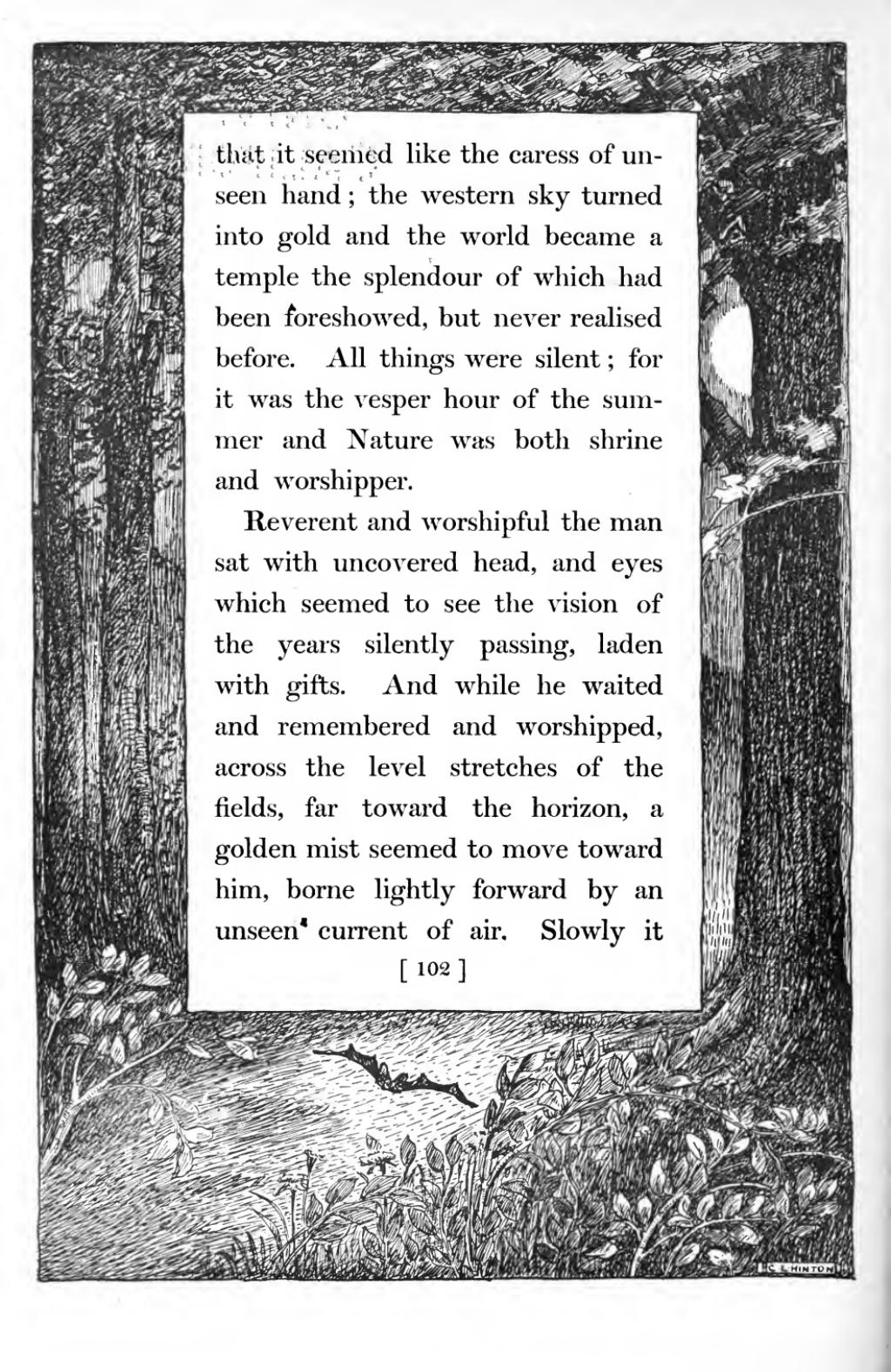
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III CALIFORNIA

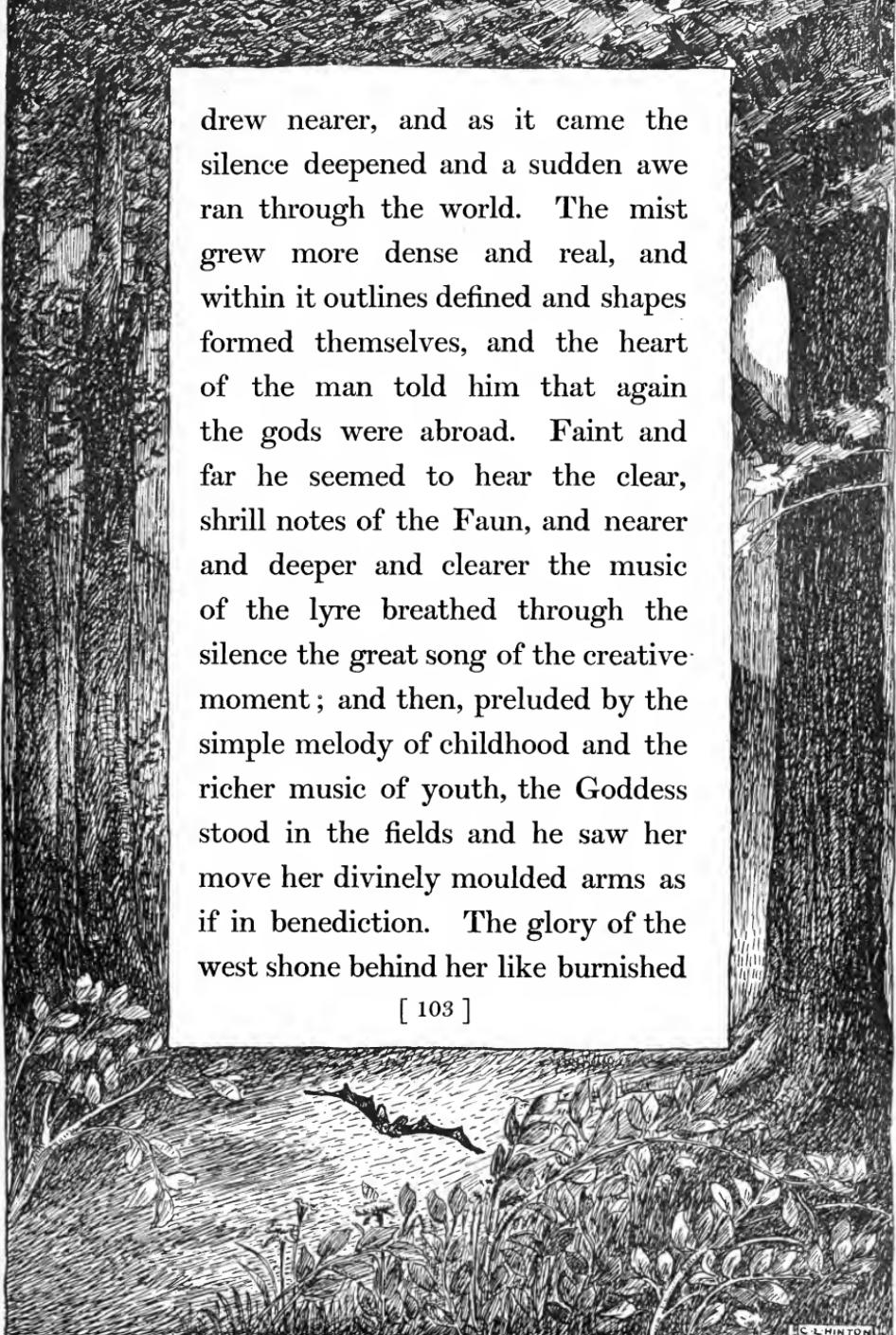
AND for him, as for all who live with Nature, the hour of revelation was not ended; upon the later as upon the earlier years there was to come the breath of the divine. As he walked the stillness seemed to deepen; the voices of reapers and gleaners died into silence; the great barges came to anchorage beside the barns. A hush fell upon the world toward sunset, so akin to that which fills the dim arches and deep aisles of cathedrals that the old man paused, looked thoughtfully over the landscape, and seated himself beside a familiar tree. The air was warm, and moved so gently

[101]

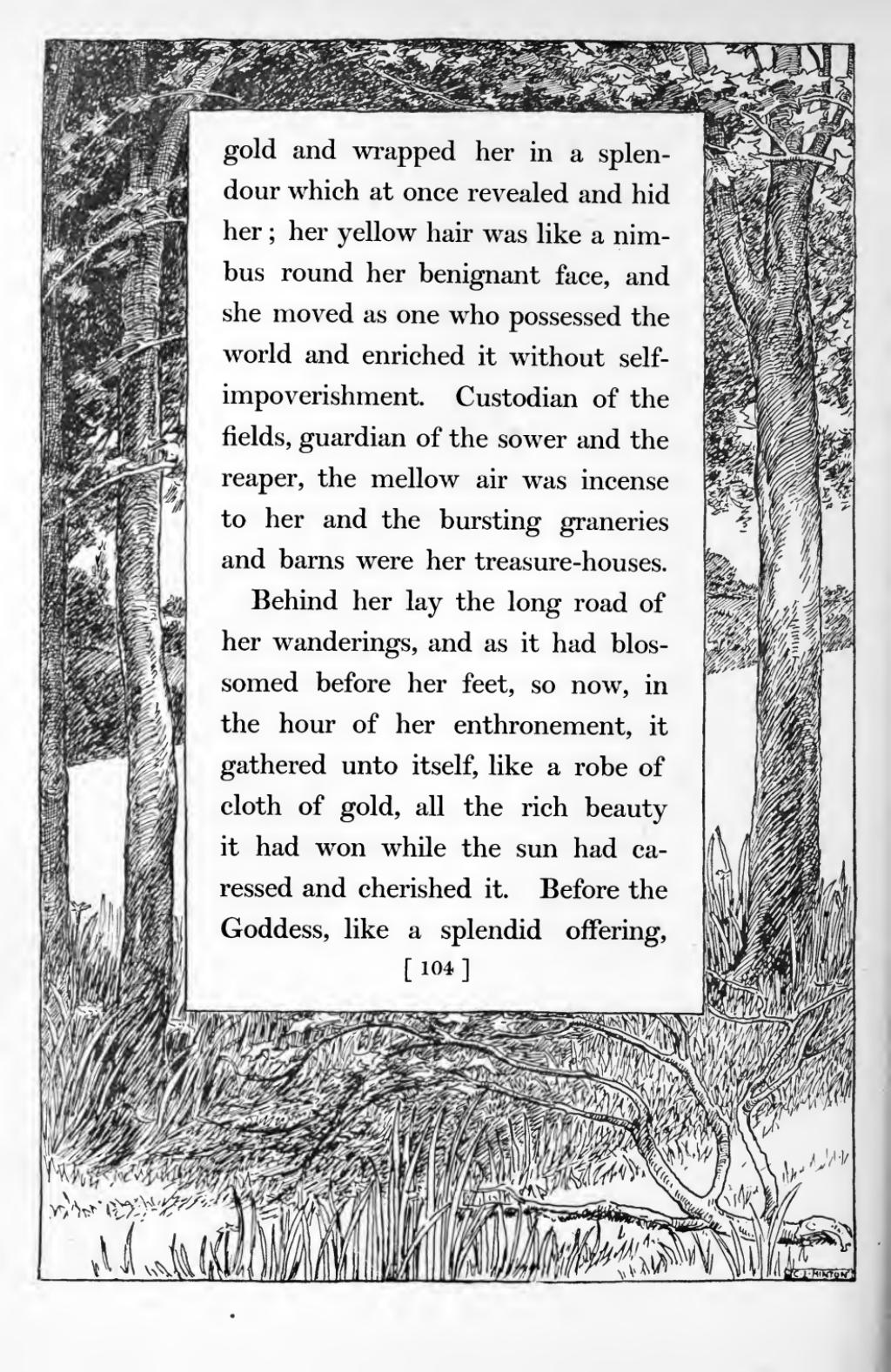


that it seemed like the caress of un-seen hand ; the western sky turned into gold and the world became a temple the splendour of which had been foreshowed, but never realised before. All things were silent ; for it was the vesper hour of the summer and Nature was both shrine and worshipper.

Reverent and worshipful the man sat with uncovered head, and eyes which seemed to see the vision of the years silently passing, laden with gifts. And while he waited and remembered and worshipped, across the level stretches of the fields, far toward the horizon, a golden mist seemed to move toward him, borne lightly forward by an unseen current of air. Slowly it

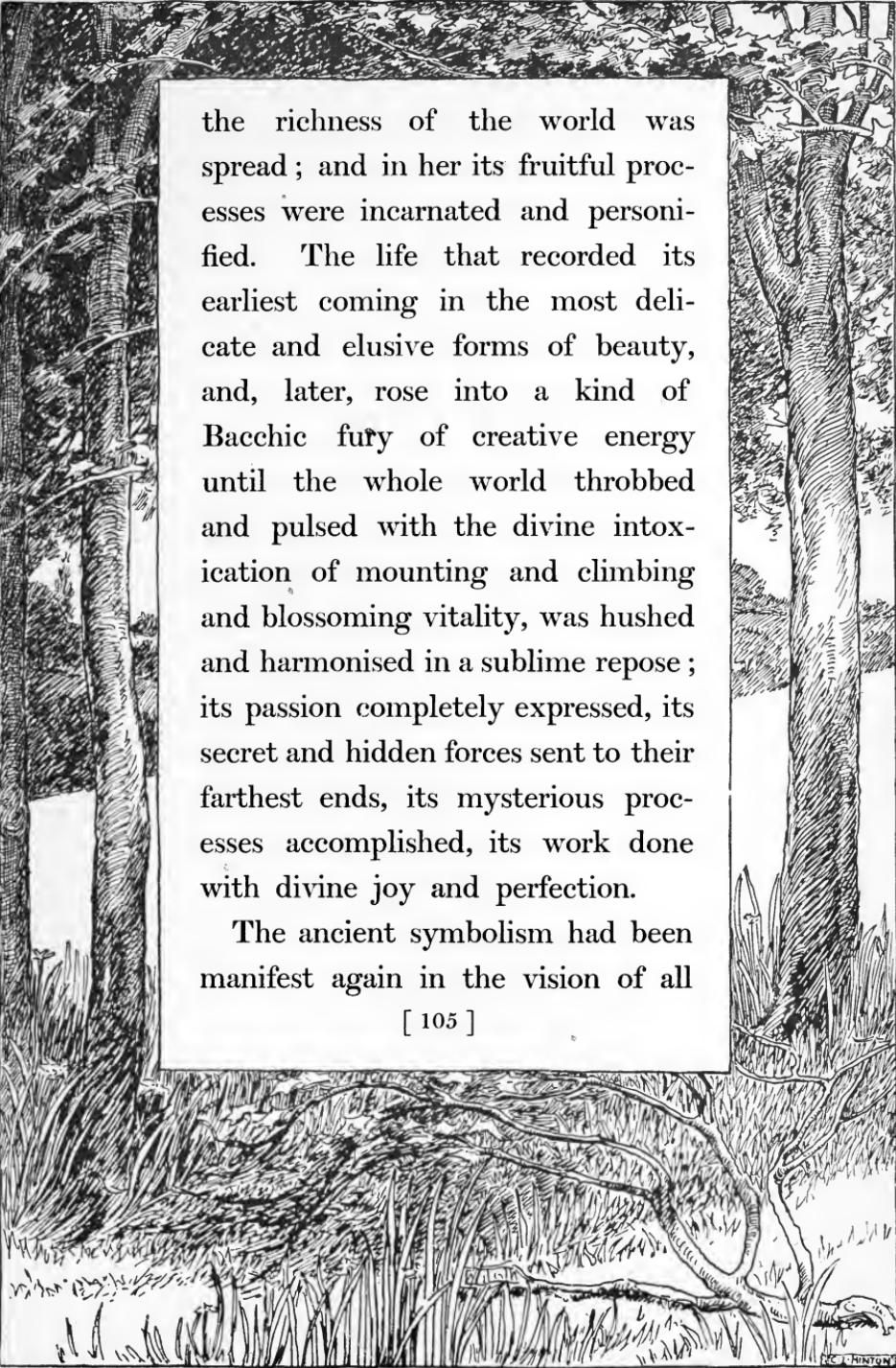


drew nearer, and as it came the silence deepened and a sudden awe ran through the world. The mist grew more dense and real, and within it outlines defined and shapes formed themselves, and the heart of the man told him that again the gods were abroad. Faint and far he seemed to hear the clear, shrill notes of the Faun, and nearer and deeper and clearer the music of the lyre breathed through the silence the great song of the creative-moment ; and then, preluded by the simple melody of childhood and the richer music of youth, the Goddess stood in the fields and he saw her move her divinely moulded arms as if in benediction. The glory of the west shone behind her like burnished



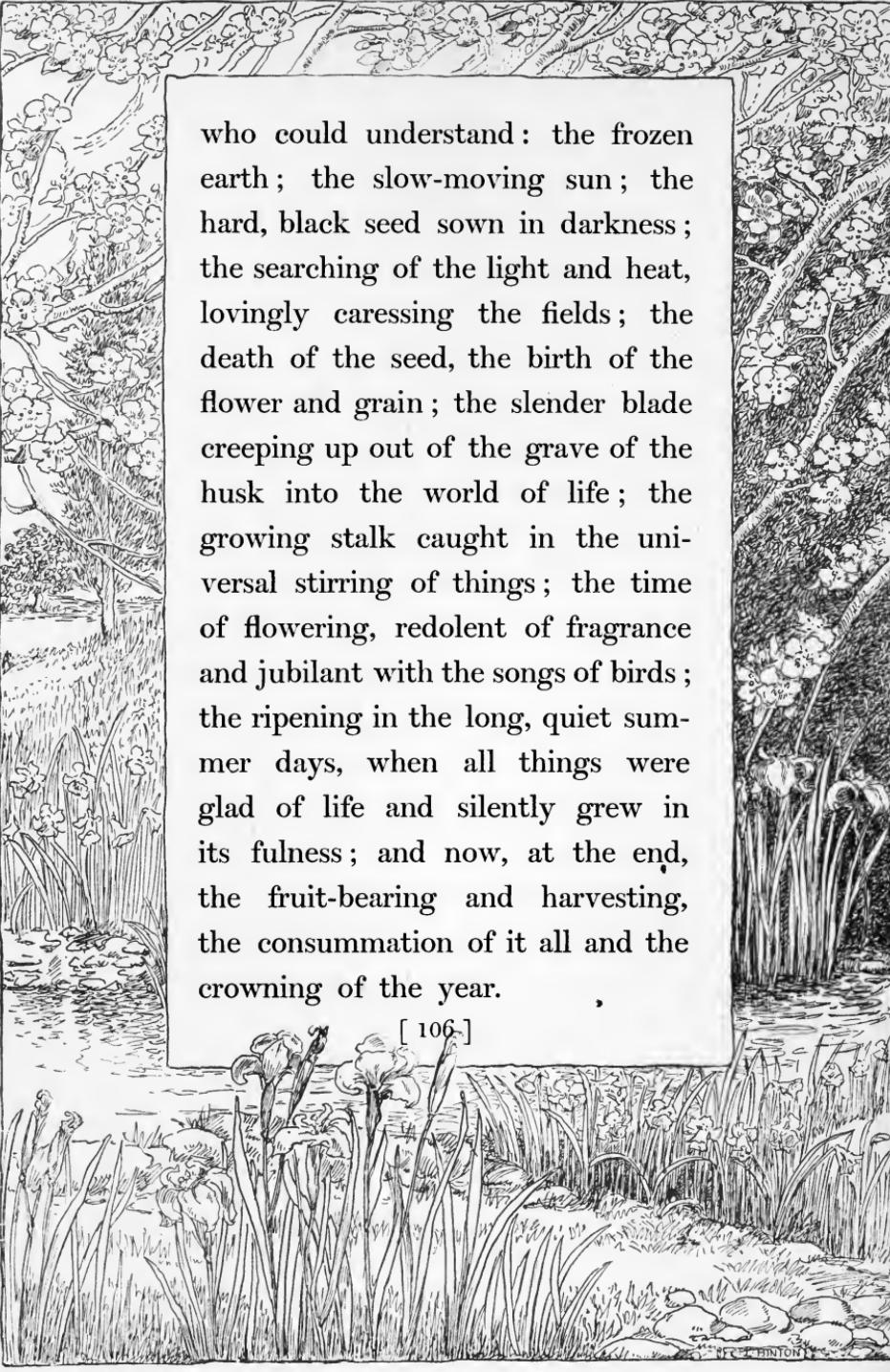
gold and wrapped her in a splendour which at once revealed and hid her ; her yellow hair was like a nimbus round her benignant face, and she moved as one who possessed the world and enriched it without self-impoverishment. Custodian of the fields, guardian of the sower and the reaper, the mellow air was incense to her and the bursting granaries and barns were her treasure-houses.

Behind her lay the long road of her wanderings, and as it had blossomed before her feet, so now, in the hour of her enthronement, it gathered unto itself, like a robe of cloth of gold, all the rich beauty it had won while the sun had caressed and cherished it. Before the Goddess, like a splendid offering,



the richness of the world was spread ; and in her its fruitful processes were incarnated and personified. The life that recorded its earliest coming in the most delicate and elusive forms of beauty, and, later, rose into a kind of Bacchic fury of creative energy until the whole world throbbed and pulsed with the divine intoxication of mounting and climbing and blossoming vitality, was hushed and harmonised in a sublime repose ; its passion completely expressed, its secret and hidden forces sent to their farthest ends, its mysterious processes accomplished, its work done with divine joy and perfection.

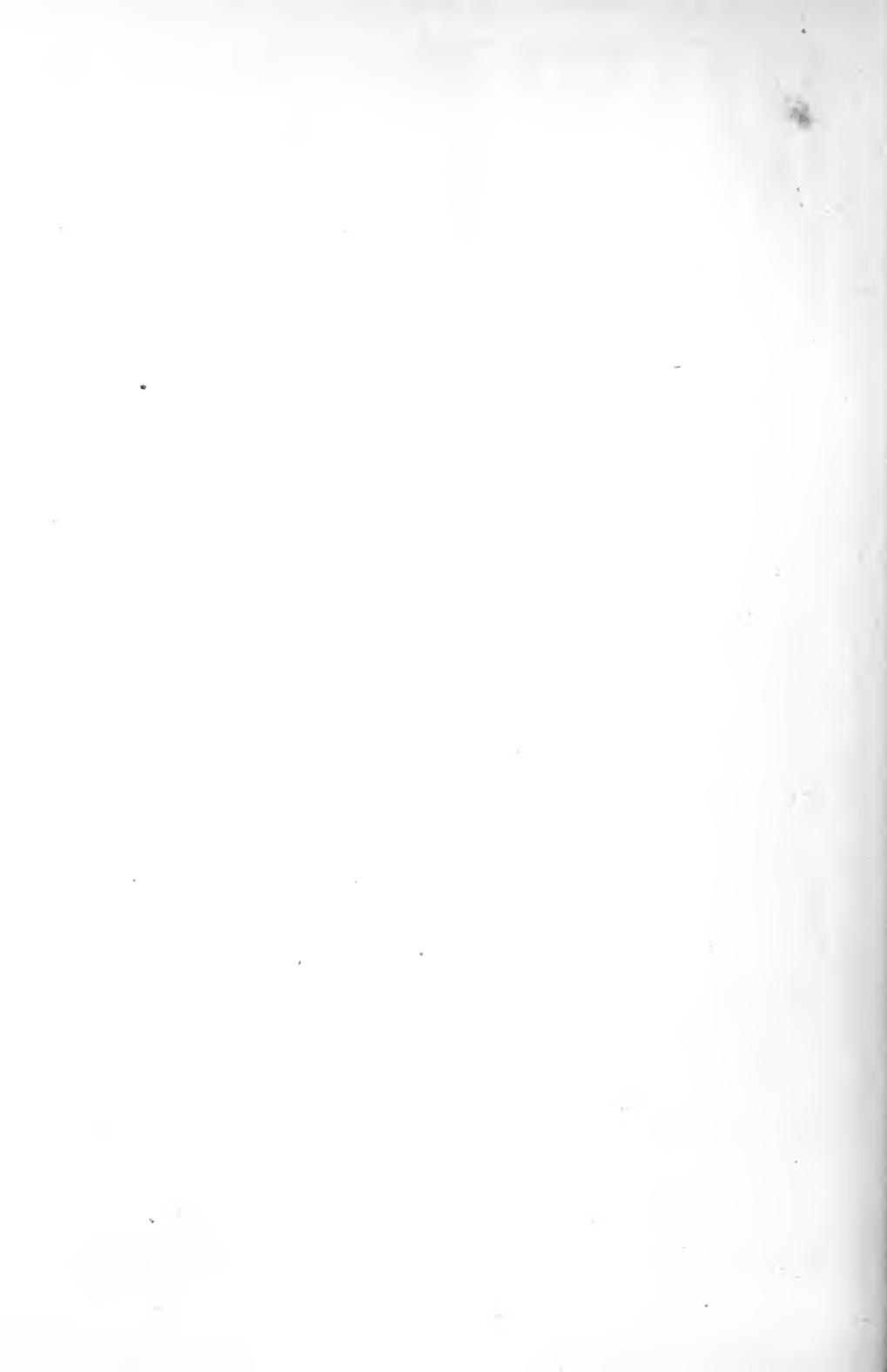
The ancient symbolism had been manifest again in the vision of all



who could understand: the frozen earth; the slow-moving sun; the hard, black seed sown in darkness; the searching of the light and heat, lovingly caressing the fields; the death of the seed, the birth of the flower and grain; the slender blade creeping up out of the grave of the husk into the world of life; the growing stalk caught in the universal stirring of things; the time of flowering, redolent of fragrance and jubilant with the songs of birds; the ripening in the long, quiet summer days, when all things were glad of life and silently grew in its fulness; and now, at the end, the fruit-bearing and harvesting, the consummation of it all and the crowning of the year.

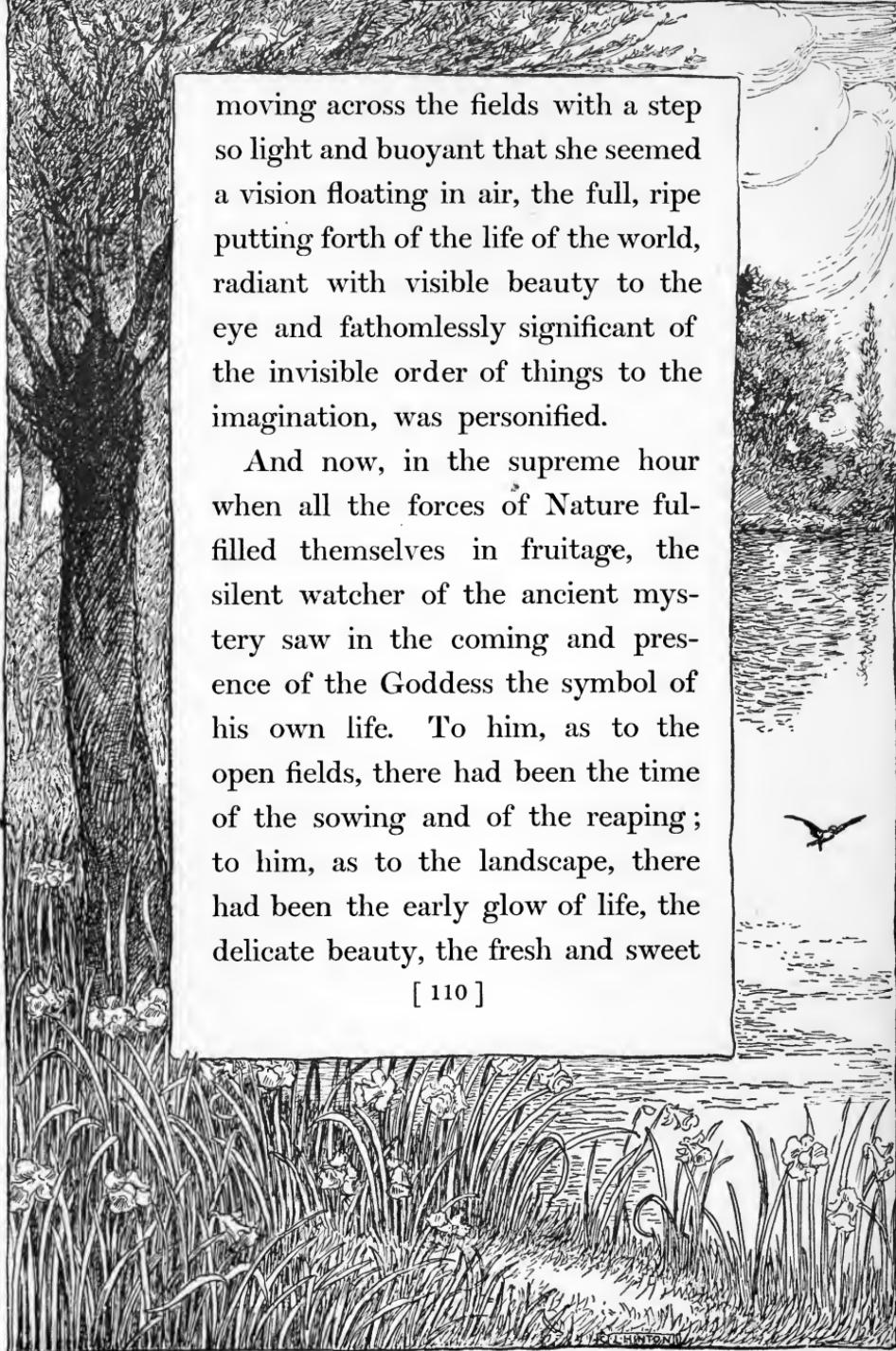


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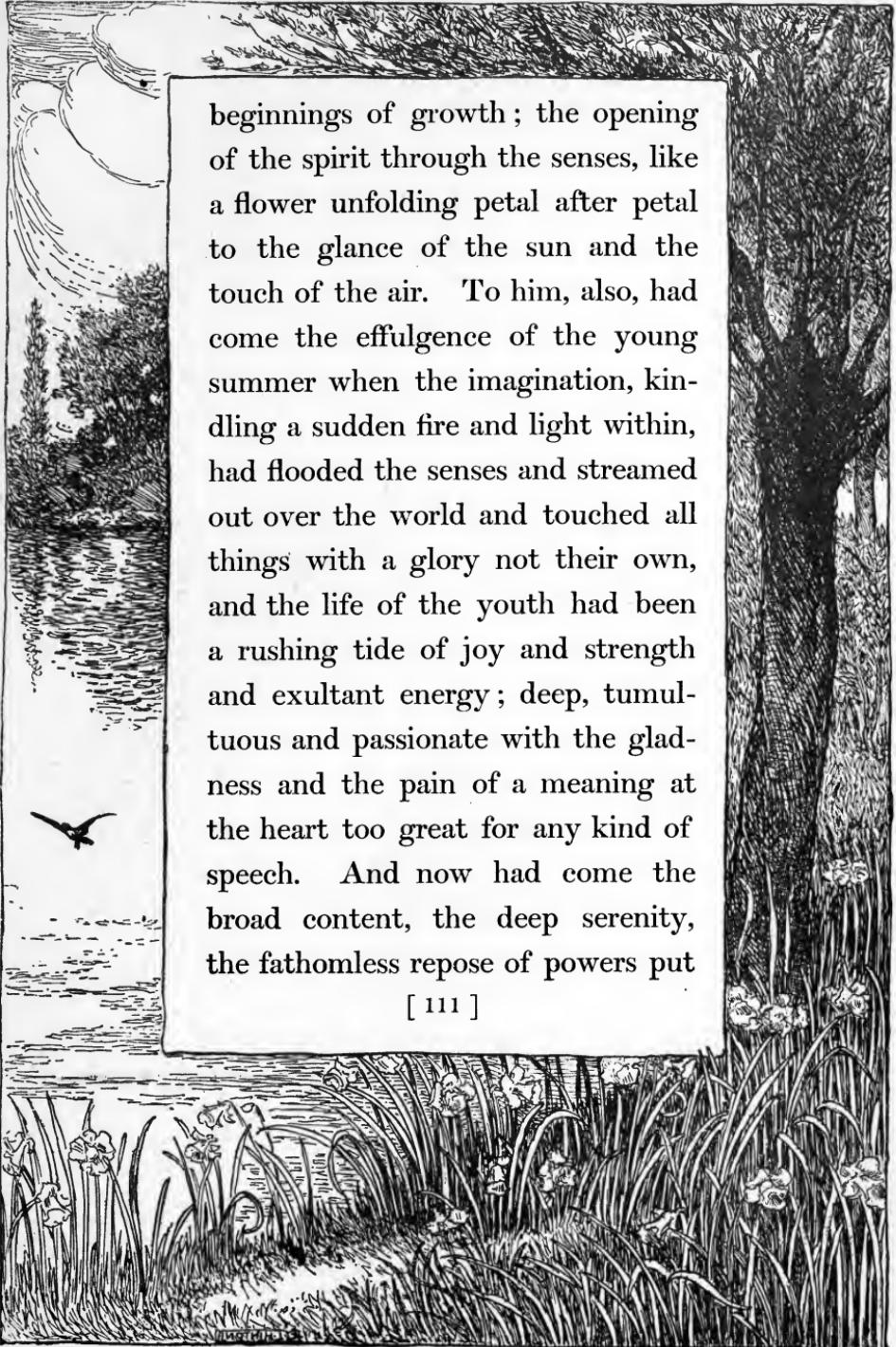
IV

THE Goddess, whose yellow hair was like a nimbus of sunshine about her, brought the fragrance of the early summer in her train, and crocus and hyacinth, narcissus and violet, daffodil, arbutus, and hepatica were in the air in delicate suggestion; in her coming the rose, which lies on the heart of nature, the ravishing symbol of her passion, bloomed again in all its deep-dyed loveliness. With her, too, moved the rich, ardent, passionate, stirring and climbing and unfolding of midsummer, when the earth bares her heart to the sun and gives herself in a great surrender. In the Goddess,

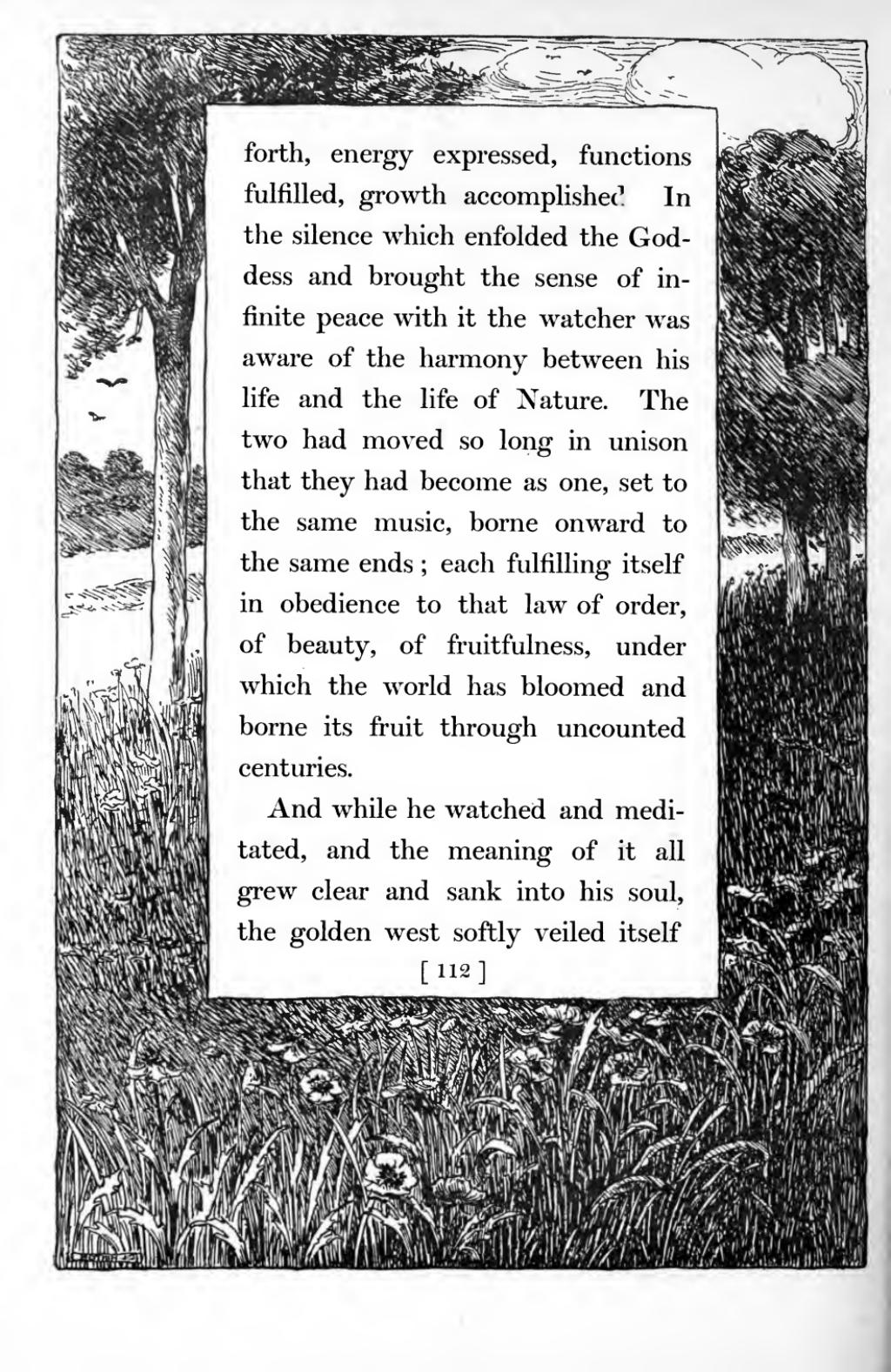


moving across the fields with a step so light and buoyant that she seemed a vision floating in air, the full, ripe putting forth of the life of the world, radiant with visible beauty to the eye and fathomlessly significant of the invisible order of things to the imagination, was personified.

And now, in the supreme hour when all the forces of Nature fulfilled themselves in fruitage, the silent watcher of the ancient mystery saw in the coming and presence of the Goddess the symbol of his own life. To him, as to the open fields, there had been the time of the sowing and of the reaping; to him, as to the landscape, there had been the early glow of life, the delicate beauty, the fresh and sweet

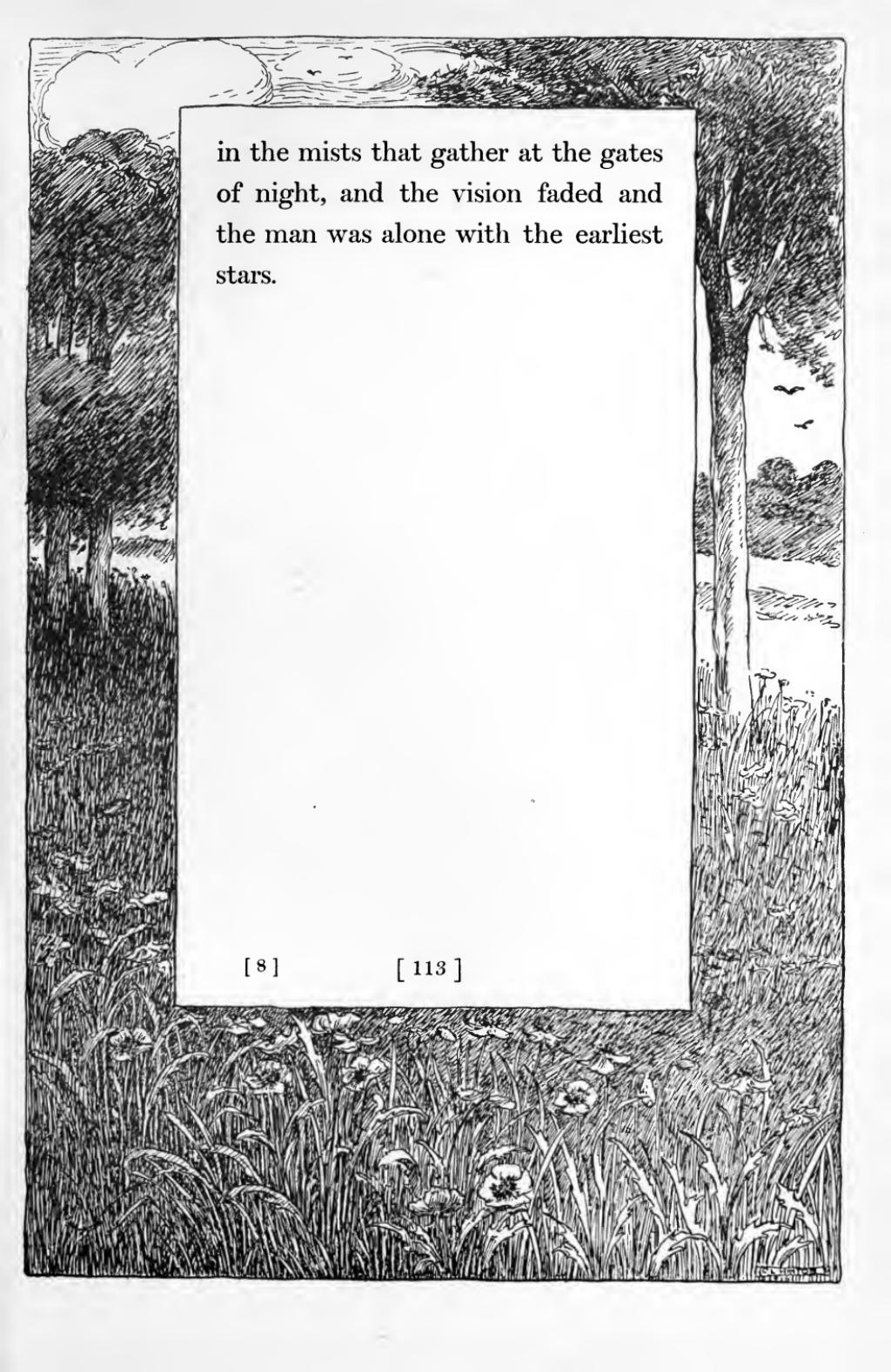


beginnings of growth ; the opening of the spirit through the senses, like a flower unfolding petal after petal to the glance of the sun and the touch of the air. To him, also, had come the effulgence of the young summer when the imagination, kindling a sudden fire and light within, had flooded the senses and streamed out over the world and touched all things with a glory not their own, and the life of the youth had been a rushing tide of joy and strength and exultant energy ; deep, tumultuous and passionate with the gladness and the pain of a meaning at the heart too great for any kind of speech. And now had come the broad content, the deep serenity, the fathomless repose of powers put

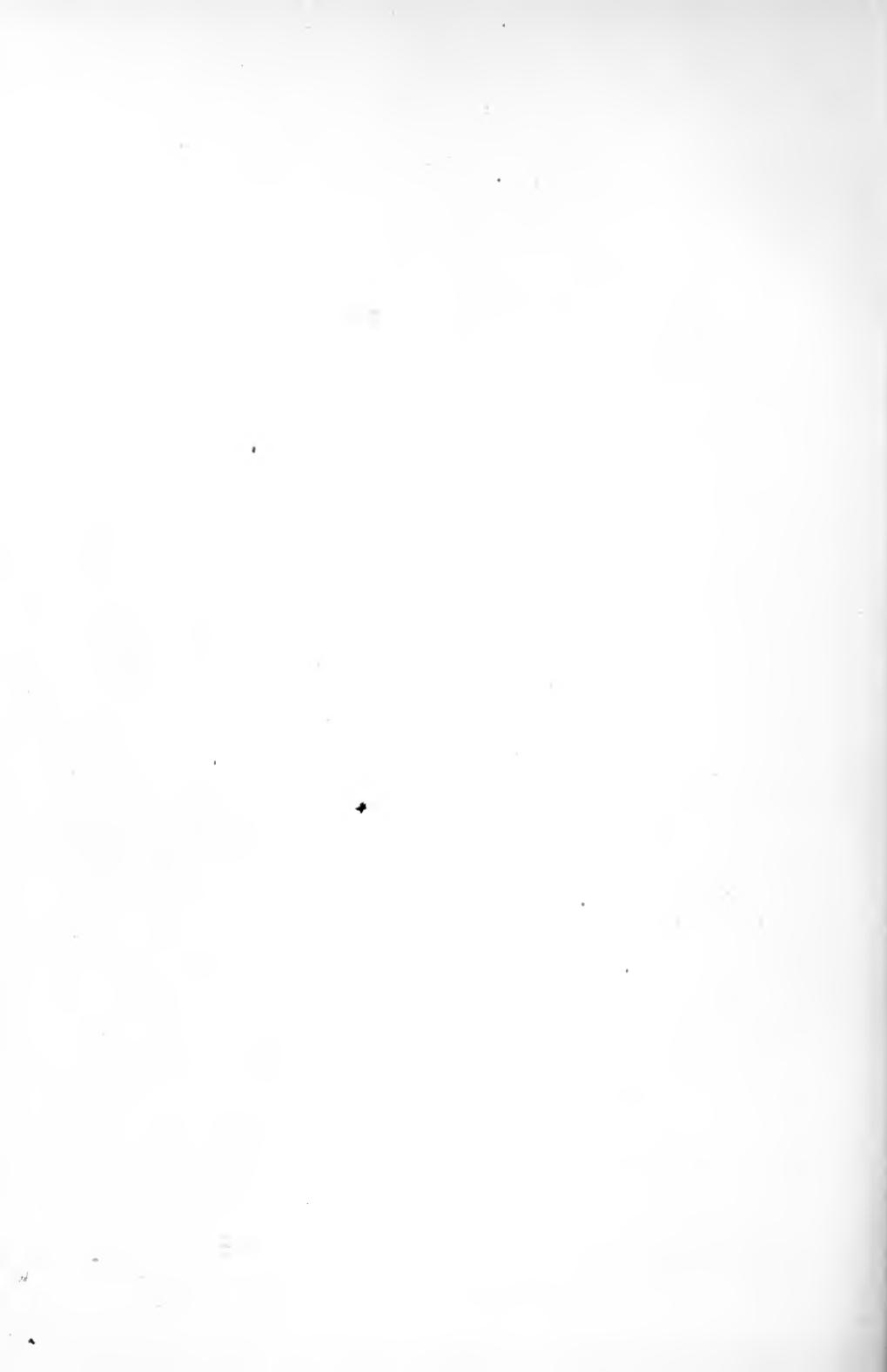


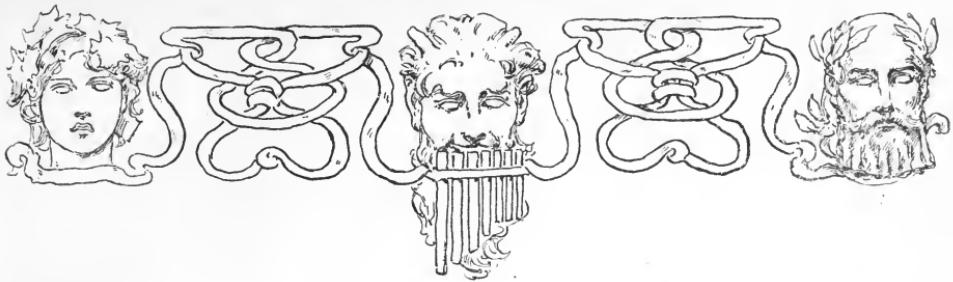
forth, energy expressed, functions fulfilled, growth accomplished! In the silence which enfolded the Goddess and brought the sense of infinite peace with it the watcher was aware of the harmony between his life and the life of Nature. The two had moved so long in unison that they had become as one, set to the same music, borne onward to the same ends ; each fulfilling itself in obedience to that law of order, of beauty, of fruitfulness, under which the world has bloomed and borne its fruit through uncounted centuries.

And while he watched and meditated, and the meaning of it all grew clear and sank into his soul, the golden west softly veiled itself



in the mists that gather at the gates
of night, and the vision faded and
the man was alone with the earliest
stars.





POSTLUDE

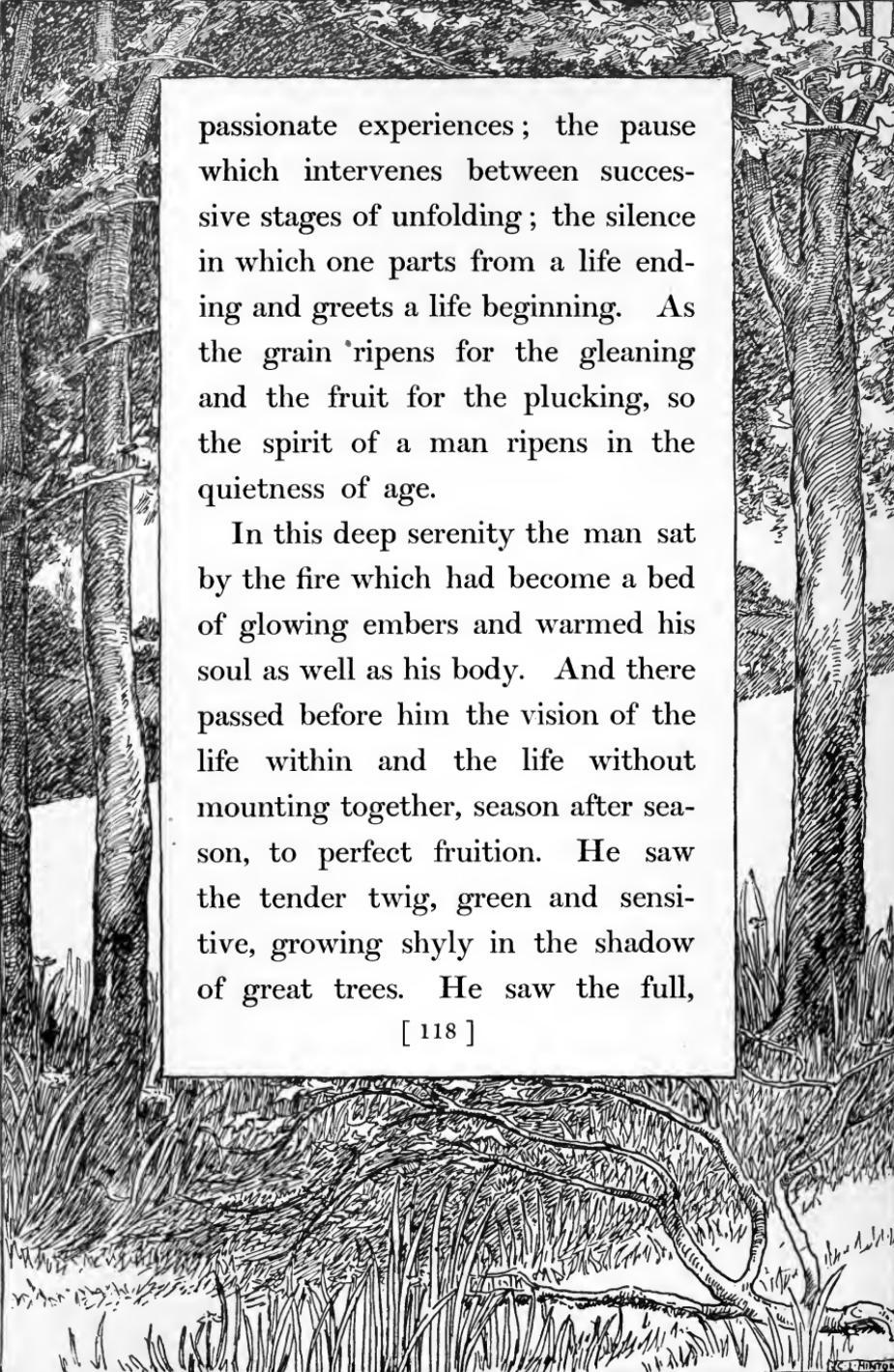
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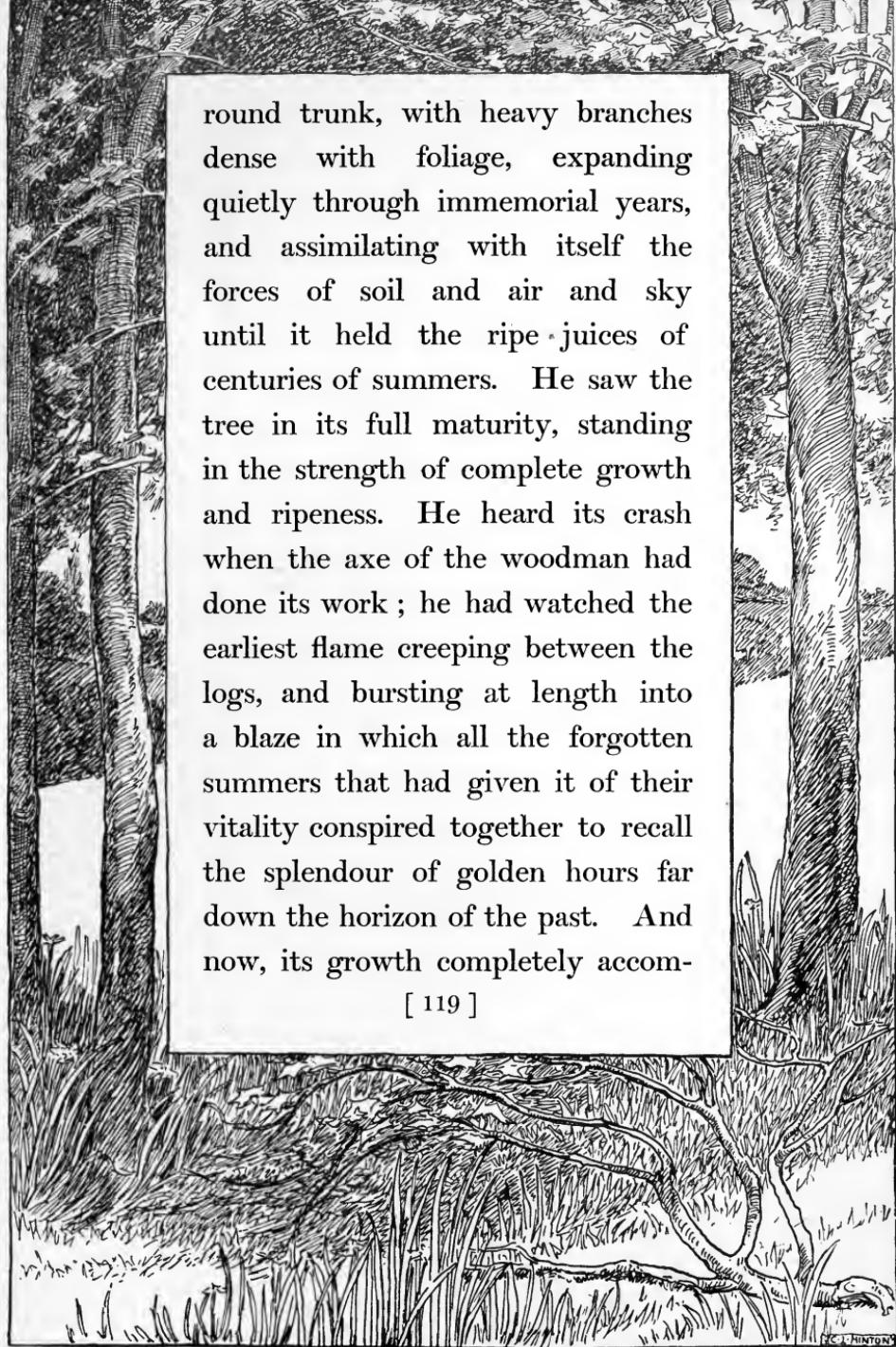
AGE had come graciously to the man who sat before the wide hearth. There had been no sudden change, no withering of the affections, no abrupt decline of power; the tide had gone out gently and softly in the hush at the end of the day and left a deep peace behind it. There had been a long ripening, and then a half-realised translation of the physical into spiritual energies; knowledge had deepened into wisdom, and in the cool of the evening there had come that tranquil meditation which distils sweetness out of arduous activities and

[117]

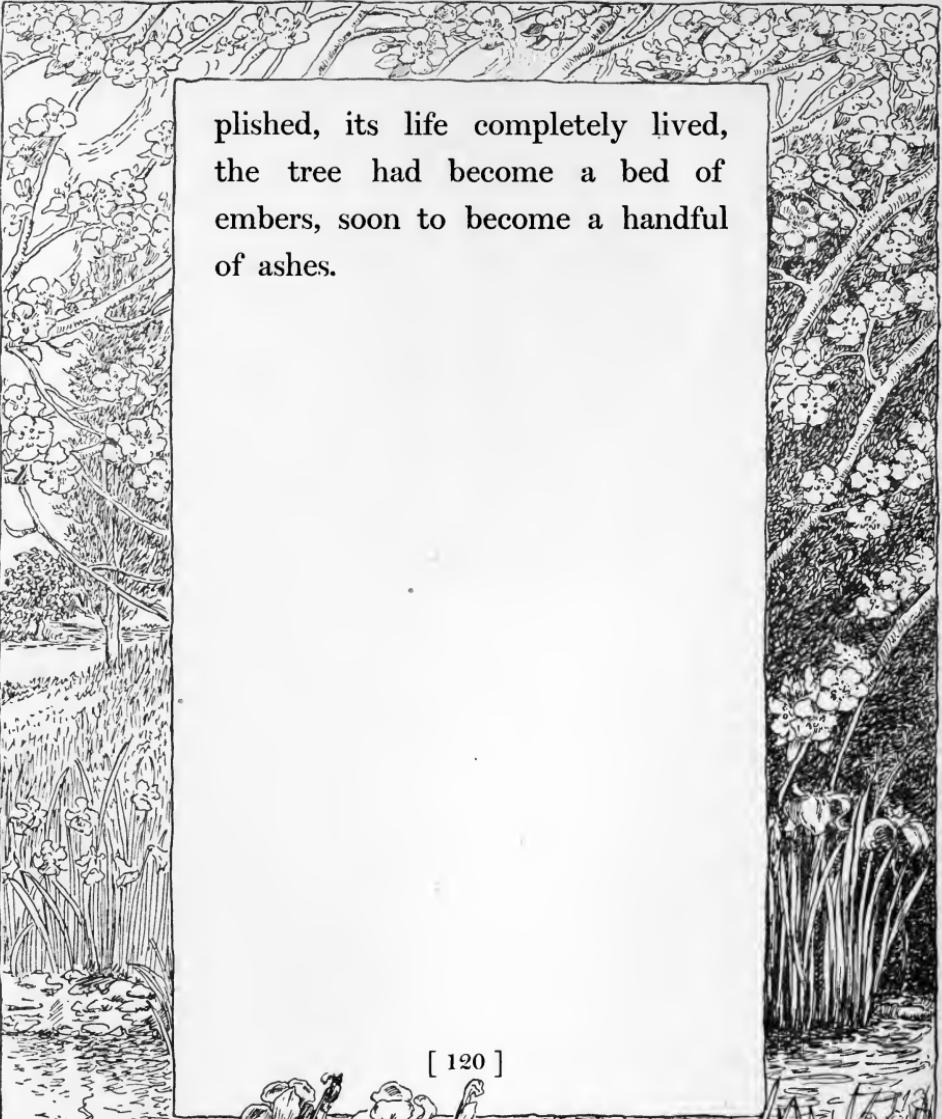


passionate experiences ; the pause which intervenes between successive stages of unfolding ; the silence in which one parts from a life ending and greets a life beginning. As the grain ripens for the gleaning and the fruit for the plucking, so the spirit of a man ripens in the quietness of age.

In this deep serenity the man sat by the fire which had become a bed of glowing embers and warmed his soul as well as his body. And there passed before him the vision of the life within and the life without mounting together, season after season, to perfect fruition. He saw the tender twig, green and sensitive, growing shyly in the shadow of great trees. He saw the full,



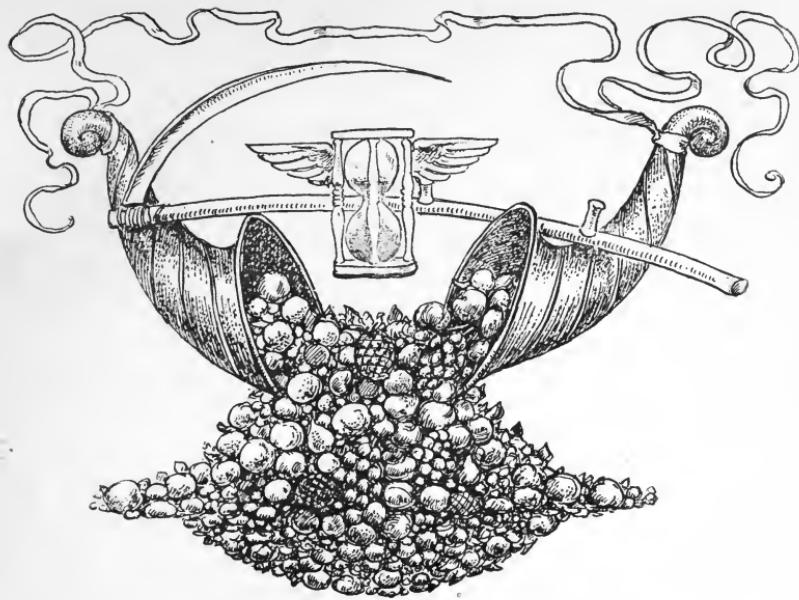
round trunk, with heavy branches dense with foliage, expanding quietly through immemorial years, and assimilating with itself the forces of soil and air and sky until it held the ripe juices of centuries of summers. He saw the tree in its full maturity, standing in the strength of complete growth and ripeness. He heard its crash when the axe of the woodman had done its work ; he had watched the earliest flame creeping between the logs, and bursting at length into a blaze in which all the forgotten summers that had given it of their vitality conspired together to recall the splendour of golden hours far down the horizon of the past. And now, its growth completely accom-



plished, its life completely lived,
the tree had become a bed of
embers, soon to become a handful
of ashes.

[120]

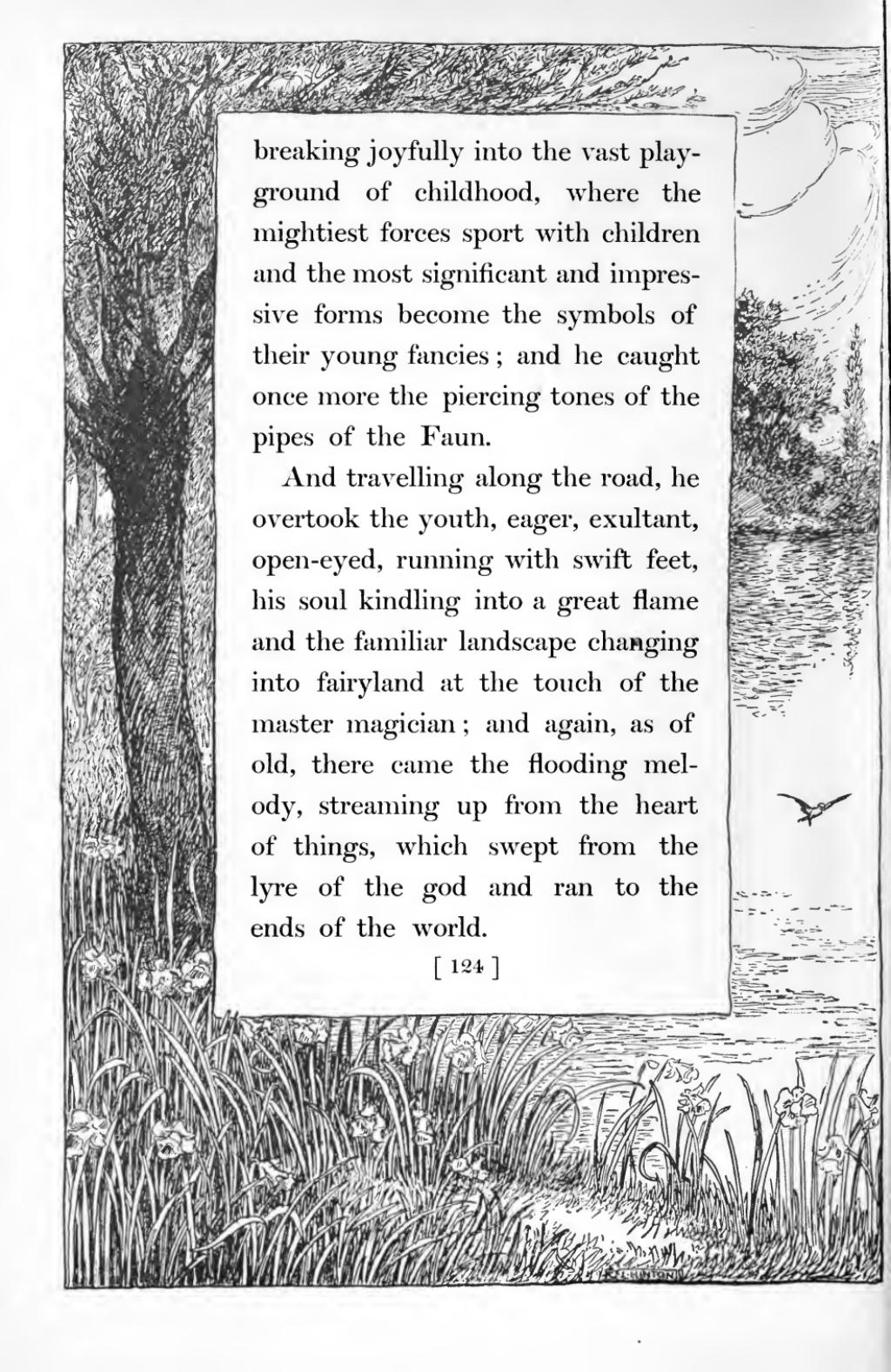




II

II

THIS parable, old as the earth and new as the slenderest sapling in the woods, the old man read again with a deep and tranquil joy. There was a true kinship between him and the life going out in light and warmth at his feet, as there was between him and all things that live within the wide empire of Nature. As he sat there, with whitened locks but with the heart of youth, tranquil and expectant, the light shone on the path by which he had come and it lay before him like a road across a rolling country upon which one looks down from some friendly hill. Far off against the horizon he saw the boy,



breaking joyfully into the vast playground of childhood, where the mightiest forces sport with children and the most significant and impressive forms become the symbols of their young fancies ; and he caught once more the piercing tones of the pipes of the Faun.

And travelling along the road, he overtook the youth, eager, exultant, open-eyed, running with swift feet, his soul kindling into a great flame and the familiar landscape changing into fairyland at the touch of the master magician ; and again, as of old, there came the flooding melody, streaming up from the heart of things, which swept from the lyre of the god and ran to the ends of the world.

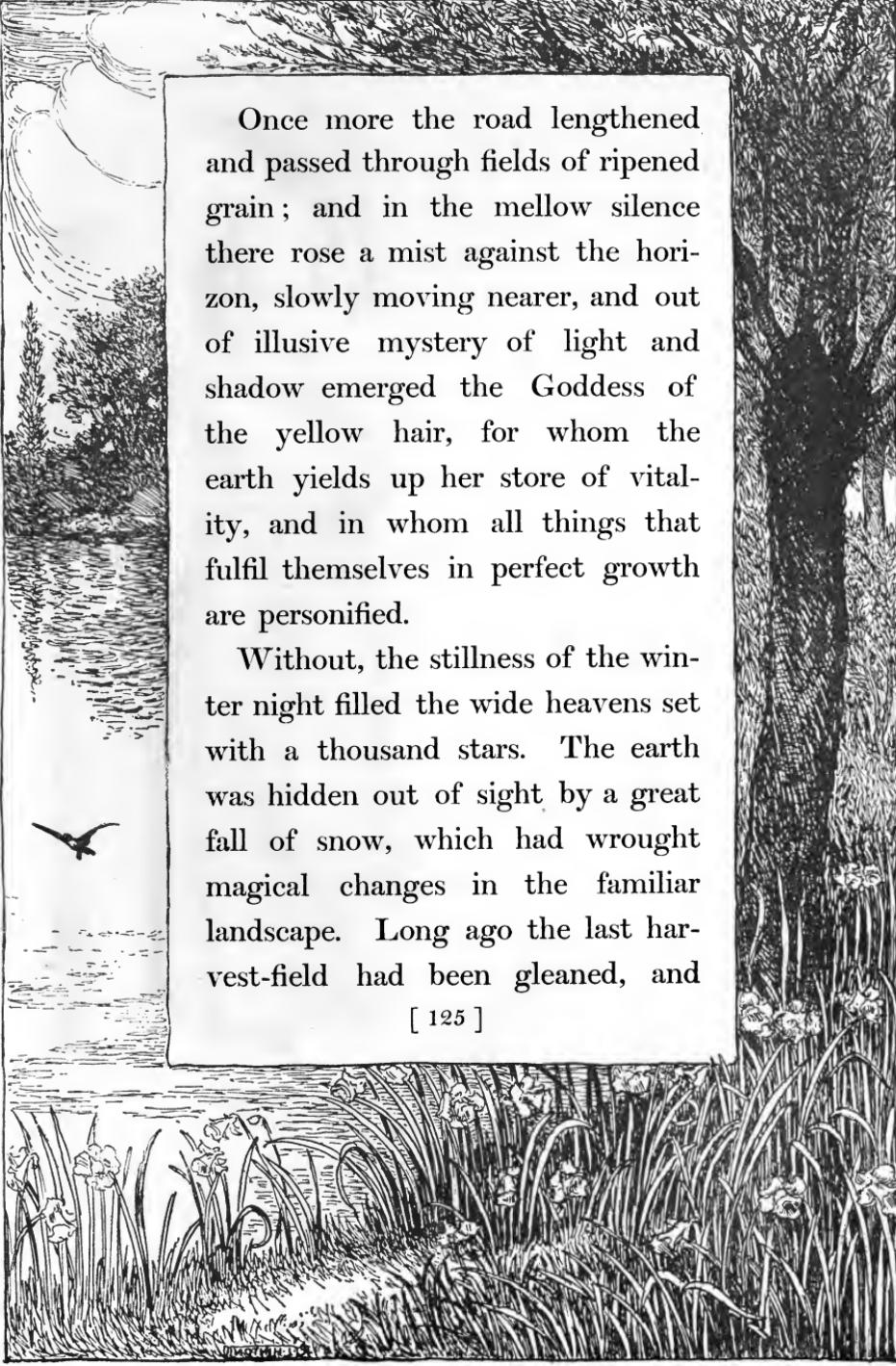


“Without, the stillness of the winter night”



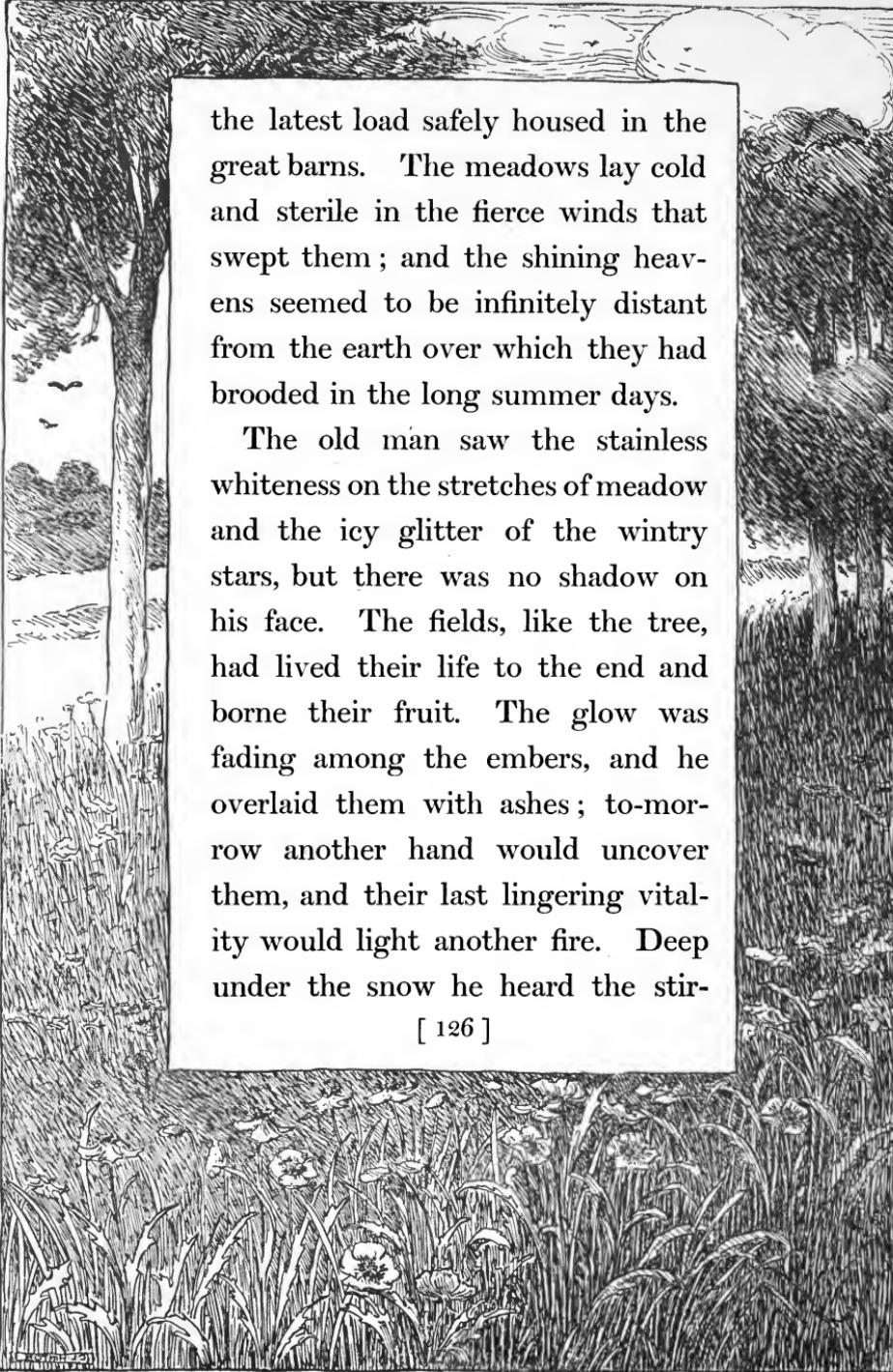
W.H. Dow

NO. 1111
AVIATION



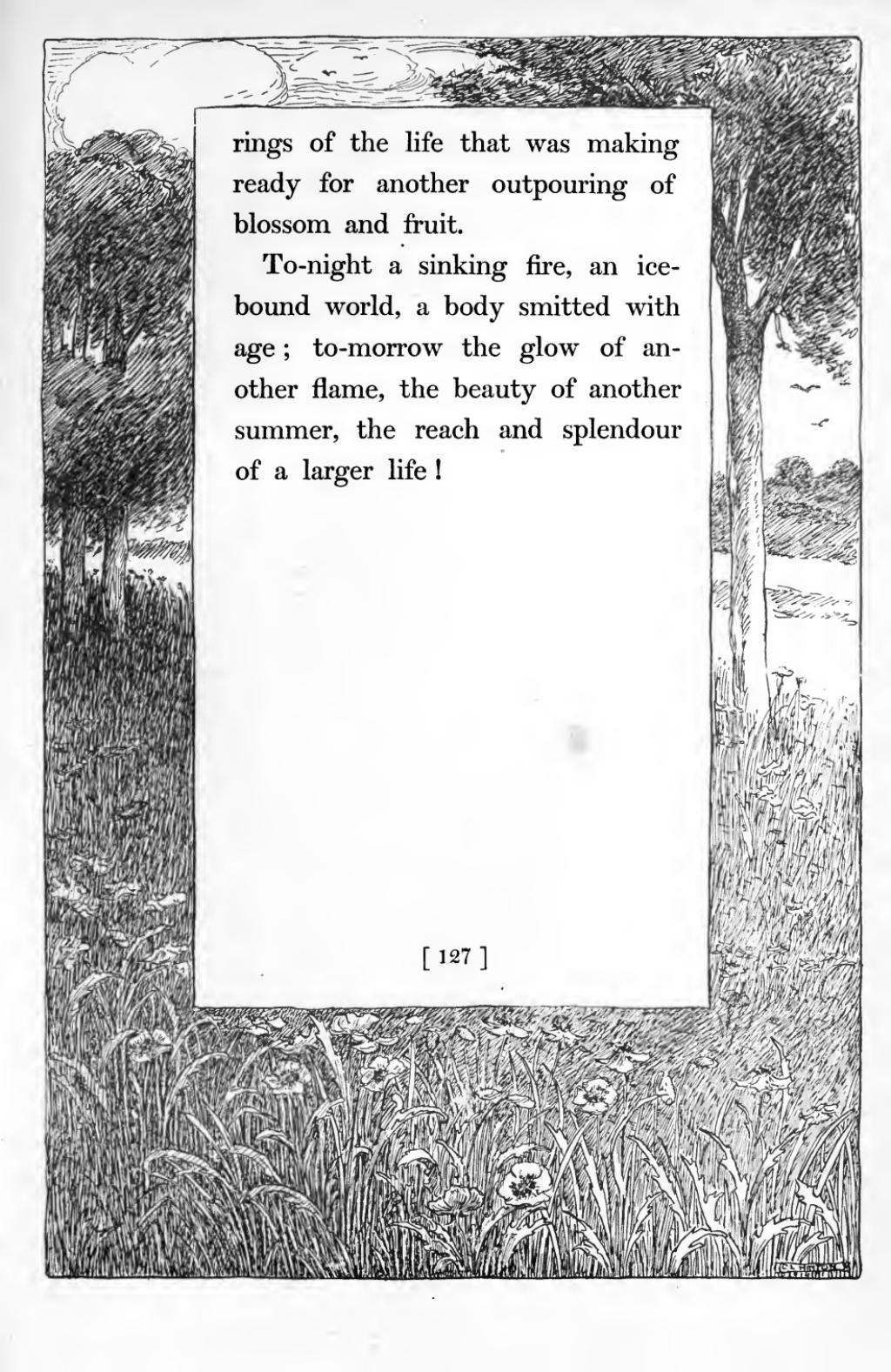
Once more the road lengthened and passed through fields of ripened grain; and in the mellow silence there rose a mist against the horizon, slowly moving nearer, and out of illusive mystery of light and shadow emerged the Goddess of the yellow hair, for whom the earth yields up her store of vitality, and in whom all things that fulfil themselves in perfect growth are personified.

Without, the stillness of the winter night filled the wide heavens set with a thousand stars. The earth was hidden out of sight by a great fall of snow, which had wrought magical changes in the familiar landscape. Long ago the last harvest-field had been gleaned, and



the latest load safely housed in the great barns. The meadows lay cold and sterile in the fierce winds that swept them ; and the shining heavens seemed to be infinitely distant from the earth over which they had brooded in the long summer days.

The old man saw the stainless whiteness on the stretches of meadow and the icy glitter of the wintry stars, but there was no shadow on his face. The fields, like the tree, had lived their life to the end and borne their fruit. The glow was fading among the embers, and he overlaid them with ashes ; to-morrow another hand would uncover them, and their last lingering vitality would light another fire. Deep under the snow he heard the stir-



rings of the life that was making ready for another outpouring of blossom and fruit.

To-night a sinking fire, an ice-bound world, a body smitten with age ; to-morrow the glow of another flame, the beauty of another summer, the reach and splendour of a larger life !







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